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OF
HIMACHAL PRADESH**

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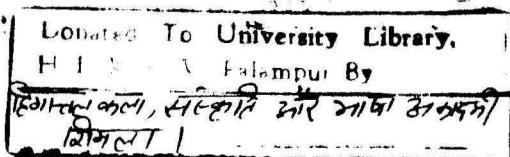
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HISTORY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

DR M S AHLUWALIA

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DEDICATED
TO
THE PEOPLE
OF
HIMACHAL PRADESH

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	vii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. <i>Himachal Pradesh: The geographical background and natural divisions</i>	
B. A survey of source-material	
II. EARLY POLITICAL HISTORY	37
A. Stone age to tribal Republics	
B. Imperial Guptas to Rajput States	
III. EARLY TURKISH INVASIONS	73
IV. HIMACHAL AND THE MUGHAL RULERS	89
A. The Mughals and Kangra Group of Hills	
B. The Mughals and Chamba	
V. HIMACHAL AND THE SIKHS	117
A. The Sikh Gurus and Himachal	
B. Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Kangra Hills	
VI. THE GURKHAS AND THE BRITISH	153
A. The Gurkhas and the Himachal Hills	
B. The British annexation and Himachal	
VII. POPULAR UPRISINGS AND SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS	181 ,
VIII. THE HILL TRIBES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH	205
<i>Appendices</i>	233
<i>Bibliography</i>	239
<i>Index</i>	249

PREFACE

Very little is known about the Himalayan Hill States, much less about the Hill State of Himachal Pradesh. It is not unusual therefore, to note that the history of Himachal Pradesh is mixed with legends, folklores and traditional accounts. The available local sources deal only with a colourful account of the ruling houses of the former Hill States, now forming a part of the modern state of Himachal Pradesh.

Himachal Pradesh occupies an important position in the dominion of the Indian Republic. Its importance lies not only in its being a frontline State, but also because of its colourful history, its potentiality with natural resources, its dominant tribes and its scenic beauty.

In this humble attempt, I have tried to collect and collate information concerning the state of Himachal Pradesh in a brief and handy treatise of its past history and glories.

My thanks are due to the University Grants Commission for its financial assistance, under the scheme of Book Writing, which enabled me to complete this book. The present study is based on my previous researches, the M.Phil and Ph.D researches of my numerous students as well as studies so far conducted on the history and culture of Himachal Pradesh. The writer acknowledges his debt to all those scholars from whose earlier studies he has largely drawn. My thanks are due to Smt. Charnjit Kaur, who has prepared a comprehensive Index on most modern lines and to Sh. D.R. Chopra of Intellectual Book Corner for taking extra pains in the publication of the present volume.

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M.S. AHLUWALIA

**'IN A HUNDRED AGES OF THE GODS
I COULD NOT TELL THEE
OF THE
GLORIES OF HIMACHAL'**

SKANDA-PURANA

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

- A. HIMACHAL PRADESH: THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND AND NATURAL DIVISIONS**
- B. A SURVEY OF SOURCE-MATERIAL**

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

A. HIMACHAL PRADESH: THE GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND AND NATURAL DIVISIONS.

The word *HIMACHAL* derives its origin from two Hindi words, 'Him' and 'Achal' meaning 'Snow' and "Lap" respectively. Thus etymologically, Himachal Pradesh (Hill States) stands for the region which lies in the slopes and foot-hills of snow i.e. the Himalayas.¹

It may however, be noted that the Himalayas is not a single continuous chain of mountain but a series of parallel ranges intersected by enormous valleys and extensive plateaus. Running from Kashmir to the eastern end of Assam, it covers a tract of land 200 to 400 kilometers in breadth and 2,400 to 2,550 kilometers in length between the Indus river in the west and the Brahmaputra river in the east.

Himachal, known as *Dev Bhumi* to the ancients, is situated in the heart of the Western Himalayas. According to the *Puranas*, Himachal is the *Jalandhara Khand*² of the Himalayas. In praising the glories of Himachal, the *Skand Purana* says. 'He who thinks of Himachal, though he may not behold it, is greater than he who performs worship in Kashi and shall have pardon for all his sins. Those, while dying think of its snows, are liberated from their sins. In a hundred ages of gods I could not tell them of the glories of Himachal where Shiva lived and the Ganges fell from the foot of Vishnu like the slender thread of a lotus flower.'³

Himachal Pradesh⁴ is bordered by the fertile plain of Uttar

Pradesh in the south (i.e. south east of Himachal) and the state of Punjab (i.e. south west of Himachal); on the north-west by the picturesque valley of Kashmir and on the north-east by Tibet, the land of the Lamas.

Physiographically, the territory can be divided into three zones: outer Himalaya or the Shiwaliks; inner Himalaya or the mid mountain zone and the greater Himalaya or the Alpine zone. The area stretching from Kashmir to Himachal Pradesh is one of the most complicated geological regions of the Himalayas. The region falls into four broad stratigraphical zones:

- (1) Outer or Sub-Himalayan Zone;
- (2) Lower Himalayan Zone;
- (3) Higher Himalayan Zone, and
- (4) Tibetan or Tethys Himalayan Zone.

The outer or Sub-Himalayan zone is also known as the Shiwaliks or the foothill zone (of the Punjab Himalaya), which consists predominantly of tertiary formations, extending from north west to south east. The system comprises of great thickness of detrital rocks, clays and conglomerates. The Shiwalik chain is widest in the valley of the Beas. On palaeontological grounds these are sub-divided into three main groups: (a) Upper (b) Middle and (c) Lower (or Nahan). The Sirmur series are also represented by three groups: Kasauli, Dagshai and Sabathu.

The lower Himalayan zone lies between the main 'Boundary Thrust' and the 'Central Himalayan Thrust'. Most of the part of this zone is composed by granite and other crystalline rocks of unfossiliferous sediments. The Krol belt stretching from Shimla region towards the east continuing almost throughout the Garhwal and Kumaon Himalaya, separates this region from the Shiwalik⁵ system.

The higher Himalayan zone can be recognised only in the eastern part of the region, covering the southern part of the Spiti region. The Tibetan (Spiti) or Tethys Himalayan zone covers the Spiti valley. The richness in fossils and the nearly continuous well-exposed sections have made Spiti a world famous region which surprisingly remains unstudied so far by the geologists.

Himachal region is veiled from the Punjab plains by the

Shiwalik hills. It is a mountainous tract with altitudes ranging from about 450 meters to 6500 meters above sea level. The region presents an intricate mosaic of mountain ranges, hills and valleys.

The snow-clad peaks are the most prominent landmark. The Dhauladhar range looks in supreme majesty over the Kangra valley while the Pir Panjal, the Great Himalayan and the Zaskai ranges stand guard over Chamba, Lahul Spiti, Kulu and Kinnaur. The majestic array of hoary peaks is visible from far and wide. The mountain slopes are covered with forests and meadows. The peaceful valleys below are interspread with numerous streams, fields and quaint homesteads. No scenery presents such sublime and delightful contrasts. Nowhere in the world the small natural regions are more sharply separated than in the Himalayas.

There is a gradual increase in elevation from the west and south to north. Out of the three physiographic zones, the southern zone consists of low hills of Shiwaliks. The lesser Himalaya is marked by a gradual elevation towards the Dhauladhar and the Pir Panjal ranges. In the south the rise is more abrupt in the Shimla hills. To the south of Shimla is the high peak of Chaur (3,647 mts.). To the north of Sutlej the rise is gradual. The series of parallel ranges are divided by longitudinal valleys, the exception being the Kulu valley which runs transverse to the main alignment. Kangra valley is a longitudinal trough at the foot of the Dhauladhar range.

The Pir Panjal, the largest of the lesser Himalayan ranges, bifurcates from the Great Himalayan Range near the bank of Chenab on one side and the Beas and Ravi on the other. It bends towards the Dhauladhar range near the source of Ravi. South of Lahul, a considerable area rises above the snow-line and beholds numerous glaciers. Rohtang Pass (4,800 meters) and many other passes lie across it. The Great Himalayan Range (5,000-6,000 mts.) runs along the eastern boundary and is cut across by the defile of the Sutlej. The Range separates the drainage of the Spiti from that of the Beas.

There are certain famous passes across the range such as Kangla (5,248), Bara Lacha Pass (4,512), Kanzam (4,551), Perang (5,548) and Pin Parbat (4,802). The Zaskar range is the easternmost range and separates Spiti and Kinnaur from Tibet. It has peaks over 6,500 meters, Riwo Phargyul (6,791) and Shimla (7,026 meters). Gumrang and

Sholarung passes connect the basin of Sutlej with the basin in Tibet.⁶ The Zaskar range is cut across by the Sutlej through its Shipki defile. There are many glaciers over the Zaskar and the Great Himalayan ranges.⁷

Rivers: Five rivers flow through the Pradesh. The eastern most river is Yamuna which rises from Yamnotri in the Garhwal range of the Himalayas and forms the eastern boundary with Uttar Pradesh. Its important tributaries are Tons, Pabar, and Giri or Giri Ganga. The Pabar rises from Chander, Nahan lake on the Chanshal peak in Rohru and the Giri from Kupar peak just above the Jubbal town.

The Sutlej, the largest among the five rivers of Himachal Pradesh, originates beyond the Indian border in the southern slopes of the Kailash mountain, Lord Shiva's abode in the *Puranic* lore. After a run of about 320 kms from Rakastal, it enters the eastern part of Himachal Pradesh at Shipki (6,608 meters). Between the Zaskar and the great Himalayan crossing, the Sutlej receives the Spiti from the north-west. In Kinnaur it is joined by the Baspa river which rises from the southern Baspa hills. Just below Rampur Bushahr, it is joined by Nogli stream. Flowing through Kinnaur, Shimla hills and Bilaspur district, it leaves Himachal Pradesh to enter the plains of the Punjab at Bhakra, where one of the world's largest dam has been constructed. As a result of this dam, a very big lake known as Gobind Sagar lake has been formed in the valley of Bilaspur.

The Beas, which forms the world famous valley of Kulu and Kangra rises from the 3987 meters high Rohtang Pass. The main course of this river is south-ward to Larji and later to the west. Its tributaries in the east are Parbati, Sujoin, Phojal and Sraswati streams. At Bajaura, it enters Mandi district. The town of Mandi is situated on its left bank. In Mandi district the northern feeders of Beas are Uhal, Luni, Rana and Binwa and the southern ones are Hansa, Tirthan, Bakhli, Jiuni, Suketi, Panodi, Son and Bather. Beas enters Kangra district at Sandhol. Here it is joined by Binwa, Neogal, Banganga, Gaj, Dehr and Chakki from the north and Kunah and Man from the south. The northern and eastern tributaries of the Beas are snow fed and perennial, while the southern affluents are seasonal. During the monsoon in the month of August, its inflow increases greatly and sometimes results in floods. The river leaves this district near Mirthal. At Pandoh, in Mandi, the waters of the Beas today have been diverted to Sutlej through a big tunnel.

The Ravi rises from an amphitheatre like basin called Bara Bhangal - a branch of Dhauladhar. It first flows west-ward through a trough separating the Pir Panjal from the Dhauladhar range and then turns southwards, cutting a deep gorge through the latter. Thereafter it flows into the Chamba district and after a journey of about 130 kilometers through this region finally leaves it at Kheri. During its course from Bara Bhangal, to the place where it leaves Himachal Pradesh to enter Punjab, it receives several streams from the adjoining areas. The left bank tributaries are not so important except the Chirchind nala. The tributaries of the right bank are of considerable importance. A few important ones are Budhil, Tundah-Berjedi, Saho or Sal and Siul. Chamba town, the ancient capital of the Chamba state and now headquarters of the district, is situated on the right bank of Ravi.

The fifth and the last river is Chandrabhaga or Chenab. The Chandra and the Bhaga streams rise from the opposite sides of Baralacha pass at an elevation of 4,891 meters, the Chandra from the south-east and the Bhaga from the north-west. These rivulets unite at Tandi, (2,286 meters) to form one river of great size and volume which flows immediately parallel to the north of this mid-Himalayan range. A little beyond Bhujind, it enters the Pangi valley of the Chamba district and it leaves Chamba at Sansari nala.

Most of the rivers of Himachal Pradesh are snow-fed. During the monsoons, they become raging torrents, carrying enormous quantity of water and in winter, when the water get frozen at the higher altitudes, they shrink in volume though remaining indomitable.*

Rainfall and Climate

The rainfall in the first zone varies from 60 to 70 inches and in the second zone from 30 to 40 inches.⁹ The Alpine zone remains under snow for about 5 to 6 months in the year and this has compelled the inhabitants to become migratory. The average rainfall is 63-65 inches.⁹

In the Himachal region, there is much diversification in climatic conditions due to variation in elevation (450-6,500 meters). In general, the climate of this area is distinguished from the Punjab plains by a shorter and cooler weather, a somewhat higher precipitation and cooler and more prolonged winter. The two main climatic characteristics of the region are

the seasonal rhythm of weather and the vertical zoning. The climatic conditions vary from hot and sub-humid tropical in the southern low tracts to temperate, cold alpine and glacial in the northern and the eastern high mountains. Lahul and Spiti experience drier conditions as they are almost cut off by the high mountain ranges.

It snows during winter down to an elevation of about 1500 meters, but the snow does not last for long below 2,500 meters. At elevations of about 3,000 meters, the average snowfall is about 3 m and lasts for 4 months, from December to March. Above 4,500 meters, there is almost perpetual snow.

Temperature:

Generally the region experiences low normal monthly maximum temperatures. The highest monthly maximum temperatures are experienced in June after which the temperatures continue to fall and the lowest monthly minimum temperatures are experienced in January. Above 20°C mean marks a hot month. Mandi has as many as 7 hot months while Shimla has none. Normal monthly minimum temperatures are as low as 1.09°C in January at Shimla and 6.5°C at Dharamsala.

Similarly the normal monthly maximum temperatures in June are 15.6°C at Shimla and 22.8°C at Dharamsala. The annual range of temperature at Shimla is 14.4°C and at Dharamsala 18.0°C. The absolute temperatures can go down in January to 4.9°C at Shimla and -0.5°C at Dharamsala and may rise to 38.3°C at Dharamsala and 42.7°C at Mandi.

The relative humidity is generally higher in Himachal region than in the adjoining plains during the pre-monsoon (May-June) and monsoon period (July-August) and September. After September, the relative humidity sharply declines and the values are generally lower than the plains. During the winter too the values are generally lower than in the plains, and continue to remain so till April.

Generally the rainfall increases from the plains to the hills according to relief and aspect. Beyond Kulu, the rainfall again decreases due to rain-shadow effect towards Lahul, Spiti and Kinnaur. Spiti is the driest (below 50 cm) being enclosed by high mountains on all sides. About $\frac{1}{4}$ of the annual rainfall is obtained during July to September;

about 20% from October to March and 10% from April to June.

Popularly the year is divided into three seasons: (1) *Hyund* or cold season (October-February); (2) *Taundi* or hot season (March-June), and (3) *Barsat* or rainy season (July-September). Although these are three prominent seasons, a brief reference to autumn and spring is necessary. Both the seasons are very delightful in the hills. The weather is cool, crisp and exhilarating during late September and October. The spring lasting from mid-February to March is short but lovely. The air is cool and fresh and flowers of myriad hues adorn the valleys, forest slopes and mountain meadows.

Natural Vegetation

Owing to wide range of altitude and climatic conditions Himachal Pradesh has diverse and rich flora. Here we come across every type of west Himalayan Flora from Himalayan meadows and high level birch and rhododendron down to tropical scrub and bamboo forests of the low foot-hills. The forests cover an area of 26,768 Kms or about 48% of the total area. The area is classified as under:

1.	Reserved forests:	1,918 kms.
2.	Demarcated protected forests:	6,886 kms
3.	Undemarcated protected forests:	15,823 kms.
4.	Unclassified forests:	868 kms.
5.	Other forests:	203 kms.
6.	Forests not under control of the forest deptt:	1,070 kms.
	Total:	26,768 kms.

National forest policy lays down that in the hilly areas like Himachal Pradesh, 60% of the total geographical area should be under forests. Efforts are being made to bring the area 'as near to the figure laid down in our National Forest Policy as possible'. The natural vegetation has a climatic altitudinal zonation.

Vegetation Zone	Altitude in Meters
1. Tropical and Sub-Tropical	300-1525
2. Temperate	1525-3650
3. Alpine	3650-4650

The tree-line is reached at about 3,950 meters beyond which are the Himalayan meadows. The snow-line is reached at about 4,600 meters. On the basis of composition, the forests can be broadly classified into:

(a) Coniferous forests and (b) broad-leaved forests. chir, deodar, kail, spruce, silver fir and chilgoza pine are coniferous species. Among the broad-leaved the main species are sal, ban oak, nobru oak, kharsu, oak, walnut, maple, bird cherry, horse chest-nut, poplar, alder, semal, tun and shisham.

The forests of the Himachal Pradesh can be classified mainly into nine forest types, viz: Dry Alpine forests, Moist Alpine Scrub Forests, Sub-Alpine Forests, Wet Temperate Forests, Sub-Tropical Pine Forests, Sub-Tropical Broad-leaved Hill Forests, northern tropical Dry Deciduous Forests and Tropical Thorn Forests.

Etymology

Etymologically Himachal Stands for the region which lies in the slopes and foot-hills of snow (Him-Achal) i.e. the Himalayas. Before 1948, this region was known as the Punjab Hill States.¹⁰ This name was first time used in the Covenant (compact) signed on March 1948 by twenty-one East Punjab Hill States. By this covenant, these states were integrated into a single centrally administered unit presently known as Himachal Pradesh and was placed under the charge of a Chief Commissioner.¹¹ Shri N.C. Mehta was the first Chief-Commissioner of the Himachal Pradesh.¹²

In 1954 the territory of part 'C' State of Bilaspur was added to the Himachal Pradesh. In 1966, on the basis of the Report of the three member Punjab States Reorganisation Commission (new Punjabi speaking State i.e. Punjab and Haryana came into existence) hilly areas of the erstwhile Punjab namely, Kangra, Kulu, Shimla, Nalagarh, Lahul and Spiti and some areas of Una tehsil of Hoshiarpur district were merged into Himachal Pradesh.

The old Himachal Pradesh consisted of six districts, viz Mandi, Mahasu, Sirmur, Chamba, Bilaspur and Kinnaur. In 1966, the number of districts went up to ten because the newly transferred area was organised into four districts of Kangra, Kulu, Shimla and Lahul and Spiti. Presently

Himachal Pradesh has 12 districts and in territory it is greater than either of Punjab and Haryana states.

Thus etymologically, Himachal Pradesh stands for the region which lies in the slopes and foot-hills of snow i.e. the Himalayas. Himachal Pradesh is a recent creation, but history of the land comprised in it goes back to remote past. Some of the ruling dynasties now extinct, claim descent from the heroes of the *Mahabharata* and even to pre-*Mahabharata* age. As in case of regions with vast span of historical past so with Himachal its history becomes more dim and obscure as the centuries recede from our vision into the distant past which has left very scanty vestiges in the form of archaeological and traditional remains.

B. A SURVEY OF SOURCE-MATERIAL

Very little is known about the past history of Himachal Pradesh and the region remained neglected particularly for want of adequate source material. There is a dearth of historical material concerning the political history of the state. This is also partly because of the reason that the territory comprising the modern state of Himachal Pradesh never developed into an independent sovereign State during the period under review. Like the medieval Muslim Kingdoms of north India and the Deccan, there was no such ruler in Himachal Pradesh to patronise the writing of the official history of the area now forming the Himachal State.

During the entire medieval period, Himachal Pradesh remained almost a semi-autonomous region under the various dynastic rulers. The position almost remained the same throughout the Sultanate and the Mughal rule. It was only during the period of the Sikh rule under Maharaja Ranjit Singh that the Kangra Hill States came under one suzerain authority. This was followed by the British rule which ended their independence and henceforth these states became a part of the central administration and authority.¹³

Politically and culturally the sources for the study of Himachal Pradesh go back to the most ancient period of Indian history. The Pradesha never failed to attract the attention of the central powers and as such it did not remain immune from the political and cultural currents of the plains and the adjoining hills. As the trade routes passing through Himachal Pradesh hills connected this region with China, Tibet and Central Asia,

it has been a centre of commercial activities through the ages. For this and other reasons, the Himachal States remained a centre of attraction for historians, social scientists, sociologists and travellers alike.

Broadly speaking, the sources for the study of Himachal history may be classified into:

1. Religious literature.
2. Persian histories.
3. Sikh historical and religious literature.
4. Epigraphical and numismatic sources, including documents in Persian, Punjabi and Tankari concerning erstwhile princely states of Himachal.
5. Travellers' account.
6. Administrative, Revenue and Settlement Reports, and
7. Secondary sources including modern works, Vanshavalis, Catalogues, Gazetteers and Research dissertations etc.

Hindu Religious Literature

In the first category, the Hindu religious literature mostly forms the source-material for the history of the ancient Himachal. In the absence of proper historical material the history of ancient Himachal is entirely based on the Religious literature in Sanskrit. Of the four *Vedas*, the earliest *Rigveda* throws some light on the various tribes which settled along the Himalayan foot-hills about 2000 B.C. Similarly the *Puranas* also contain some useful information about the people of this region, which however, is not very accurate and reliable due to absence of order, arrangement and sequence of events or dates. The two great epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, also contain some reference about the people and places of the region. In the arena of the secular Sanskrit literature, mention may be made of the dramas of Kalidasa, particularly the *Raghuvansham*. Similarly Viasakhadutta's *Devichandra Guptam*, *Mudrarakshasa* and Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* is useful for their information concerning the socio-political as well as the economic life¹⁴ of the early inhabitants of Himachal Pradesh. The *Rajatarangini*¹⁵ is a history of Kashmir, written by Kalhana. It informs about the nature of influence of Lalitaditya (724-760 A.D.) over the Trigartha and over the western hills.

Persian Sources

A large number of Persian chronicles refer to Sultan Mahmud's invasion of Nagarkot, Bhimnagar or modern Kangra, which was then famous as a place of Hindu pilgrimage and its temples were renowned for containing untold treasures. The account given in the *Tarikh-i-Yamini* or *Kitabul-Yamini* (1024 A.D.) in Arabic is followed by Khawand Mir's *Habibus-Siyar* and Ferishta's *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* also known as the *Gulshan-i-Ibrahim*.¹⁶

During the thirteenth century, a number of Persian chronicles refer to the Turkish penetration into the Shiwalik hills. Many a times, the rebel nobles or chiefs found an easy refuge in the Himalayan foot-hills. The Ranas and the Thakurs of the Sirmur hills are frequently mentioned in the Persian writings for harbouring the rebel chiefs or nobles. The two contemporary chronicles, the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* and *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*,¹⁷ often mention about the rebels finding shelter in the foot-hills of Himachal Pradesh. Incidentally, the foundation of the hill states of Kangra, Chamba, Kahlur, Dhameri/Nurpur, Dhami, Bhagal, Bhagat, Keonthal and Suket is ascribed during the same period. This may be due to the repeated onslaughts of the Turkish rulers which compelled the Hindu rulers of the Punjab Hill States to find shelter in the hills.

The first detailed reference to the penetration of the Turkish forces in the Kangra hills is found during the Tughluq period. Badr Chach in his *Qasaid-i-Badr-i-Chach*¹⁸ gives some verses under the title, *Fateh-Qila-i-Nagarkot*. Ziauddin Barani also makes a brief reference to the Nagarkot expedition led by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq personally. The campaign is believed to be a part of the bigger campaign of the Quarachil, written as Himachal by Ferishta and Nizamuddin.¹⁹

The siege and the conquest of the fort of Nagarkot by Sultan Feroz Shah Tughluq is found mentioned in a large number of contemporary and later Persian sources such as: Barani and Afif's *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*; Ferishta's *Tarikh-i-Farishta*; Shah Nawaz Khan's *Muasir-ul-Umara*,²⁰ Jahangir's *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*,²¹ Anonymous, *Sirat-i-Ferozshah*,²² and the *Shah-Fateh Kangra*.²³ The account given in these sources also find indirect reference in the Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* and the *Dharam Chand Natak*.²⁴

The Mongol invader Amir Timur, (1369-1414 A.D.) after plundering northern India in 1398 A.D. returned to Central Asia via the Shiwalik hills. In his autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Timuri*, Timur refers to Raja Ratan Sen as a 'Raja of great rank and power, in the Shiwalik hills'.²⁵

During the Afghan period, Rizaqulla Mushtaqi in his *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, gives an account of the conquest of the Kangra and its adjoining hills by the Afghan rulers. The other equally important Afghan sources are Ahmad Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, Niamatullah's *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani Makhzan-i-Afghani* and Abdullah's *Tarikh-i-Daudi*.²⁶

During the Mughal period, the frequent campaigns of Akbar's forces are found in a large number of contemporary and later Persian histories. Among these Abul Fazal's *Akbar Nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari*²⁷; Abdul Qadir Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*²⁸; Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* are quite well known.²⁹

For Emperor Jahangir's Kangra campaign, his own autobiography³⁰ the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, is an important contemporary source. A detailed description of the Kangra fort is available in the *Shash Fateh Kangra*. During the reigns of emperor Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, Kangra and its adjoining hill states remained under the charge of Mughal *subedars*. For nearly two hundred years after their subjugation by Akbar, the hill chiefs remained tributary to the Mughal rulers. In letters and other documents these chiefs were addressed as *zamindars* whereas the title of a Raja was conferred only as a personal distinction. Some royal families of the erstwhile hill states are still in possession of letters and other presents as many of them also received imperial *mansabs*.

The Sikh historical and Religious Literature

Since a major part of the modern state of Himachal Pradesh is comprised of the erstwhile Punjab Hill States, it is but natural that Persian sources pertaining to the Himachal history are also supplemented by the Sikh literary and religious sources from the beginning of the foundation of Sikh religion in the Punjab upto at least the annexation of the Sikh sovereign state of Lahore by the British.

The sources relating to the Sikhs and their history are found in Persian, Punjabi, Nagri, Urdu and English languages and furnish impor-

tant and in some cases contemporary information about the relations of the Sikhs with the hill States of Himachal Pradesh.

The *Guru Granth Sahib* or the *Adi Granth*,³¹ i.e. the Holy scripture of the Sikhs, the *Janam Sakhis*³²; the *Bachitar Natak* of Guru Gobind Singh³³; the *Gur Bilas* of Bhai Sukha Singh³⁴; the *Gur Sobra* of Sena Pat (all in Punjabi) and Mohsin Fani's *Dabistan-i-Mazahab* (in Persian)³⁵ contain several important details about the spread of Sikhism in the foot-hills of the Himalayas and the Sutlej as well as the relations of the Sikh Gurus with the Hill States of Himachal Pradesh.

Mohsin Fani, the author of the *Dabistan-i-Mazahab* who was a contemporary of the 5th, 6th and the 7th Gurus (Guru Arjun, Hargobind and Har Rai) mentions a number of anecdotes relating to the spread of the Sikh faith in the hills of Himachal and the baptism of Raja Tara Chand of Kahlur (Bilaspur). Guru Gobind Singh's own writing *Bachitar Natak* is a contemporary and first hand account of the Guru's mission and his relations with the hill chieftains of Himachal.

The Sikh traditional accounts too refer to the monetary help rendered by the hill-Rajas of Mandi, Kulu, Suket, Chamba and Haripur to Guru Arjun Dev for the completion of Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar. Only on the basis of the Sikh literary sources we know about the names of some of the ruling hill chieftains, such as Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Raja Fateh Shah of Garhwal, Raja Medini Parkash of Sirmur, Kirpal of Katoch, Gopal of Guler, Hari Chand of Hindur (Nalagarh) etc.³⁶ Among a few contemporary sources concerning the life and activities of the Sikh Gurus, particularly Guru Gobind Singh, *Hukamnamas*³⁷ also form an important source of information.

A number of Persian and non-Persian sources narrating the activities of the Sikhs during the period of Banda Singh Bahadur and the Sikh *misals* in the Himachal Pradesh are available. For the activities of Banda Bahadur (who is believed to have belonged to Sirmur State, now district Nahan of Himachal Pradesh) a large number of Persian sources are available. Among them Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*³⁸; Ghulam Husain's *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*³⁹; Sujan Rai Bhandari's, *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*,⁴⁰ Tahmas Khan's *Tahmas Nama*,⁴¹ Bakht Mal's *Khalsa Nama*,⁴² Khushwaqt Rai's *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*⁴³; Aliuddin Mufti's *Ibrat Nama*,⁴⁴ etc., are important ones.

Among the later sources, a number of Persian histories such as Ahmad Shah Batalvi's *Tarikh-i-Hind* (A.H. 1233/1818 A.D); Bute Shah's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (1848 A.D.); Ganesh Das Badehra's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (1847 A.D.)⁴⁵; in Persian and Kanhaiya Lal's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (1881); T. Princep's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (Delhi, 1846) and Sarup Lal's *Tarikh-i-Sikhan* (*Ms.*). In Urdu, though not directly related to the history of Himachal Pradesh, nevertheless are important sources for the Sikh activities in the Himachal hills, including topographical descriptions, conquests and occupation of hill states by the Sikh *misaldars*, names and biographical sketches of the Sikh and Mughal or Afghan *qiladars*, *faujdars*, *subedars* or *nazims*; dates of important events, and personal observations of the chroniclers concerning the 18th and 19th century Himachal history.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the Kangra Hill States made a serious attempt to build a vast Katoch empire under the leadership of Maharaja Sansar Chand (1775-1823 A.D.) Simultaneously, however, the post-Abdali period saw the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Sukarchakiya *misal* who gradually made himself the sovereign ruler of Punjab. With the establishment of the independent kingdom of Lahore, the Hill states too could not remain immune from the growing Sikh influence under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

A large number of Persian, Sikh and European accounts are available which contain reference to the rise of Maharaja Sansar Chand who was successful in reducing the adjoining hill states as tributaries of the Katoch kingdom of Kangra. The following Persian histories are useful for an account of the Kangra and other hill states during the rule of Maharaja Sansar Chand and Maharaja Ranjit Singh: Mian Ahmad Yar's *Shah-Namah-i-Ranjit Singh*⁴⁶; Munshi Ganga Parshad's *Ruqqat-i-Munshi Ganga Parshad*,⁴⁷ *Iqrar Namah-i-Raja-i-Kohistan was Sardar Sultan Muhammad Khan Bahadur Barakzai*,⁴⁸ Kanhaiya Lal's *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*,⁴⁹ Sohan Lal Suri's *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*,⁵⁰ *Iqbal Nama-i-Maharaja Ranjit Singh*⁵¹; *Tarikh-i-Maharaja Ranjit Singh Wa Sardaran-i-Khalsa*,⁵² and Diwan Amar Nath's *Zafar Nama-i-Ranjit Singh*⁵³

Apart from these contemporary sources, the Bhandari Collection at the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, is also useful in this context.

Manuscript No. 509 of the 'Chatar Singh Collection' in the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, is also important as it describes the relations of Maharaja Ranjit Singh with the hill chieftains of Himachal Pradesh. Among some other useful sources of this period, mention may be made of Rattan Singh Bhangu's *Prachin Panth Parkash*, (Amritsar, 1962)⁵⁴; Ganesh Das's *Char Bagh-i-Punjab*⁵⁵; and the Khalsa Darbar Records in the State Archives at Patiala. These sources contain significant information about annexation of the hill states by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Gurkha advance into the western hill states of Sirmur, Kahlur, Hindur and Kangra in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

EPIGRAPHICAL AND NUMISMATIC SOURCES

In case of the history of Himachal Pradesh during the ancient period, inscriptions have proved to be of immense value. The earliest inscriptions from Himachal date back to the rule of emperor Asoka. These are rock inscriptions in the Tons Valley; Pathiyar and Kanhiyara in the Kangra district; Salanu near Manglor in Mandi district and Soonpur hillock cave inscription of Hat Koti in Jubbal.⁵⁶ The Chamba region of Himachal Pradesh is the richest of all the epigraphical remains beginning from the 6th Century A.D. down to the last century. Another important copper plate has been found in Nirmand (Kulu) dating sixth century which was issued by Maharaja Samudrasen of Kulu.⁵⁷

A large number of copper-plates and documents preserved in the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba cover many socio-economic and administrative aspects of the early history of Himachal Pradesh. In all there are three dozen copper-plates dealing mostly with land grants from around the tenth century.

Archaeological Sources⁵⁸

On the basis of archaeological surveys, it has now been established that the history of the region dates back to the pre-historic times when man made the first settlements on this earth. The archaeological sources include stone tools and implements, coins, inscriptions, monuments and sculptures. Archaeological sites were discovered on the basis of explorations at Guler, Dehra, Dhaliara and Kangra, all in the Kangra district, to trace out the remains of Sohan culture in the sub-Himalayan basin.⁵⁹ Surveys conducted around Jwalamukhi, Dehra-Gopipur and

Nurpur and other sites give information about the early Stone Age.⁶⁰ A number of Neolithic sites have also been brought to light and a number of lithic artifacts have been discovered from these sites. However, till now neither the evidence of an Upper Palaeolithic is known nor have we come across any Mesolithic site in the Himachal Pradesh.

It is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation for such a wide gap between these two culture structures. Probably Neolithic succeeded the Palaeolithic directly and has no Mesolithic precedence. On the whole, whatever archaeological finds have been located, these have made a significant contribution to our knowledge of pre-historic culture of Himachal Pradesh.

Epigraphs

Fortunately, a large number of epigraphs have been found in various parts of Himachal Pradesh, which have helped considerably in the reconstruction of the history of ancient Himachal. The inscriptions may be broadly categorised under three headings: Commemorative, Donative and Dedicative. These have been written in various scripts such as Kharoshthi, Brahmi, Sharda, Sidha-matrika, Takari, Kutila, Nagari, Sankha, and Bhotia or Tibetan.

The earliest inscriptions from Himachal date back to the rule of emperor Asoka. These are rock inscriptions in the Tons Valley; Pathiyar and Kanhiyara in the Kangra district; Salanu near Manglor in the Mandi district and Doonpur hillock cave inscription of Hat Kotiin Jubbal tehsil of Simla district.⁶¹

Apart from the Salari rock inscription some copper-plate grants too have been found in the Kulu valley. Of these, the Nirmand copper-plate grant of 612-13 A.D. belongs to Mahasamanta and Maharaja Samudrasen.⁶² The Chamba region in Himachal Pradesh is richest of all in epigraphical remains beginning from sixth century A.D. down to the last century. A large number of copper-plates and documents are preserved in the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba which cover various political and socio-religious aspects of the history of Himachal Pradesh. In all there are three dozen copper-plates dealing mostly with the land grants from around the tenth century⁶³ to the last quarter of the eighteenth century.⁶⁴ The Chamba inscriptions are mostly in Sharda script, excepting

one which is in Tibetan, and these are all donative in character.

Some Jain inscriptions have also been found in the Kangra region. The earliest is dated 854 A.D. and records the genealogy of Digambara Jains of Kangra. The second Jain inscription is dated V.S. 1296/1240 A.D. found in the Baijnath temple and refers to the teachings of Svetambara faith in Kangra.⁶⁵

Among the *prasastis*, mention may be made of two *prasastis* from Baijnath in Sharda script edited by Cunningham and re-edited by Buhler.⁶⁶ The latter has placed them in 1204 A.D. In Shimla district, three inscriptions have so far been discovered. The earliest, as already referred above, is from Hat Koti. The second one is also from the same place whereas the third is from Balag, on the left bank of river Giri.⁶⁷

The Tibetan inscriptions so far discovered in Himachal Pradesh come from the Kinnaur and Spiti monasteries which are dated 1050 A.D. and show Guge's control of these areas in Himachal. Apart from these inscriptions, a number of inscriptions belonging to the neighbouring kingdoms also help considerably in assessment of political history of the ancient Himachal. Some of these are the Gwalior *prasati* of Mihirbhoja; the Pehowa inscription of 882 A.D., and the Khajuraho inscription of 954 A.D. These inscriptions suggest that the Pratiharas, the Chandellas and the Palas also made attempts to hold sway over the various parts of Himachal Pradesh.⁶⁸

During the medieval period, apart from Chamba and Kulu inscriptions, we have also a large number of stone-inscriptions, mostly *sati*-pillars which are found in the Shiwalik hills. These were erected to commemorate the memory of the various hill rajas who died fighting during the course of their battles with Guru Gobind Singh, such as in the battle of Bhangani in the Sirmur hills.⁶⁹

Himachal Pradesh is also dotted with a large number of Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain temples, which are very rich in art remains such as stone and metal sculptures, wood carvings and various *tankas* and murals in the Buddhist monasteries. Both the types of Indo-Aryan as well as *Khasa* temples are rich repertoire of ornaments, scroll works and decorative works, apart from their architectural styles and decorative patterns.⁷⁰

Numismatic Sources

Apart from Inscriptions, numismatic evidence has also been found very useful in unearthing the remote past of Himachal Pradesh. Numismatic sources are useful in knowing about the political unity, social achievements as well as the economic prosperity of the area around the find-spots of the coins. The earliest coins found in the Himachal Pradesh belong to the ancient tribal kingdoms of Audumbara, Trigarta, Kulutas and Kunindas which flourished between the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. The State Museum, Shimla and Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba have a large collection of the coins.

The earliest coins found in Himachal are 37 punchmarked coins from Arki which bear five symbols on one side and weigh about 54 grains.⁷¹ Indo-Greek coins were discovered from two villages, Lachori and Sarol in Chamba. Twenty-one coins of Apollodotus have been found in Tappa Mewa village in Hamirpur district and thirty coins from Jwala Mukhi. These coins indicate Greco-Bactrian penetration into Chamba and Hamirpur areas of Himachal.⁷²

The coins of tribal republics found in Himachal Pradesh include those of Kunindas,⁷³ Audumbaras,⁷⁴ Kulutas,⁷⁵ Trigartas,⁷⁶ Yaudheyas⁷⁷ and Hindu Shahis.⁷⁸ According to studies conducted recently, the earliest coin in Himachal Pradesh found in Kulu was issued by one Virayash king and it dates back to the first century A.D. A few other coins from Shimla and Kangra in Himachal dating back to first or second century have been found which have been named as punch-marked coins.⁷⁹

Thus apart from the local coins of the *Janapadas* mentioned above and of the Rajput dynasties of the early medieval period, coins belonging to Indo-Greek and the Kushans have also been found in the state. These coins form an important source for political, social, religious and economic history of Himachal Pradesh.

Travellers' Accounts

In addition to the literary, archaeological and numismatic sources, we have another very important source of information in the form of account left by foreign travellers. The earliest and a reliable historical reference to the Himalayan States is found in the travellogue left by Hiuen

Tsang, the Chinese traveller, who visited India in 630 A.D. and has made important observations about Jalanadhara, Kuluta and Srughna.¹⁰ He has left a detailed account of Kulu, its crops, and snowy mountains. He also refers to twenty Buddhist *sangharamas* and one thousand priests as well as fifteen Deva temples of different sects. He also informs us that emperor Asoka built a *stupa* in the middle of Kulu, which is unfortunately not traceable now.

A number of European travellers too visited this area. The most important are: J.B. Fraser, *Journal of a Tour through snowy Ranges of the Himalaya Mountain, and to the sources of river Jamuna and Ganges* (London, 1920);

Baron Charles Hugel, *Travels in Cashmere and the Punjab*, (tr. from German by Major T.B. Jervis, London, 1845); W. Moorcroft and George Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab etc.* (London, 1837, reprint, 1970);

Major Archer, *Tours in Upper India and in the parts of the Himalayan Mountains*, 2 vols (London, 1833);

George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England, through North India, Kashmir; Afghanistan and Persia into Russia*, 2 vols (London, 1798, Reprint, 1970);

G.T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh, Iskardo etc.* (London, 1844);

J.C. Davidson, *Diary of Travels and Adventures in Upper India etc.* (London, 1843);

Capt. A.F.P. Harcourt, *Himalayan Districts of Kooloo, Lahoul and Spiti* (London, 1871, Delhi Reprint, 1982);

G.T. Vinge, *A Personal Narrative of a visit to Ghazni, Cabule etc.* (London, 1840).

These travellers have made important observations about the state of affairs in the hill areas which they happened to cross. Their accounts deal with the courts of the native Himalayan princes and their

relations in contrast with the outside powers including the Sikhs, Gurkhas and the British.

Apart from writing their travel accounts in book form, some of the European travellers, published their travelogues in the form of articles. Some of the important ones are:

1. Alexander Cunningham, 'Journal of a trip through Kulu and Lahul'; *Journal of Letters*, 1848, XVII.;
2. J.D. Cunningham, 'Notes on Moorcroft's Travels in Ladakh and on Gerard's Account of Kunawar', *Journal of Letters*, 1844, XIII.;
3. A Gerard, 'Narrative of a Journey from Subathoo to Shipke', *Journal of Letters*, 1842, XI.;
4. J.D. Gerard, 'Observations on Spiti', *Asiatic Researches*, 1833, XVIII (2);
5. Patrick Gerard, 'Observations on the climate of Subathu and Kotgarh', *Asiatic Researches*, 1842, XI.,
6. Patrick Gerard, 'A General statement of the weather at Kotgarh and Soobatho, for 1819-20-21.', *Journal of Letters*, 1843, XII⁸¹

These and other travellers have left interesting accounts of their tours of the various parts of the hill state of Himachal. Their description covers a wide range of subjects such as political conditions of the hill states, the power of the various Rajas, economic and social conditions, art and architecture, sculpture, painting, climate and flora and fauna etc.⁸²

ADMINISTRATIVE, REVENUE AND SETTLEMENT REPORTS ETC.

With the British annexation of the hill states, including those of Himachal Pradesh, a number of settlement reports were prepared. An important settlement report concerning Kangra prepared by G.C. Barnes is found in the *Punjab Correspondence of the Board of Administration for the Affairs of the Punjab*, Vol. I, (Lahore, 1852); The issue of land

ownership in the hill states is discussed in the *Preliminary Report on the General Question of Settlement of Suket State*, (Lahore, 1923). Reference may also be made to the *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Kangra District* by J.B. Lyall (Lahore, 1874 and 1882).

The village administration and issues of land ownership have been discussed in a recent article, 'Goshen, A Gaddi Village in the Himalayas'.⁸³

DOCUMENTS IN PERSIAN, PUNJABI AND TANKARI

The Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba has preserved historical source material of various types beginning from the early medieval period till the end of the nineteenth century. A catalogue of the various types of source material was prepared by J.Ph. Vogel in 1909. After the publication of this catalogue, some more documents were collected by the Museum authorities which are lying there mostly uncatalogued. The source material available in the Museum includes; Stone Inscriptions, Sculptures, Metal Inscriptions, Wood Carvings, Embroideries and Textiles, Paintings and Archival Documents in Persian, Tankari and Punjabi.

The Chamba Museum contains a collection of 128 documents of which 72 have been catalogued by J.Ph. Vogel. Fifty-six available documents (in Tankari) were collected by the Museum authorities after the publication of the catalogue in 1909 A.D. A large number of the catalogued Tankari documents covering the later half of the 18th and early 19th century comprise of *sanads*, letters, agreements, title deeds, statements and treaties etc. A number of uncatalogued Tankari documents also cover more or less the same aspects.

Twenty-eight Persian documents cover the period from around the middle of the seventeenth century to 1846 A.D.⁸⁴ It is quite interesting to note that the Chamba documents of the early period are mostly in Persian whereas from the end of the eighteenth century onwards, these documents are also available in local languages such as Tankari and the Gurmukhi.⁸⁵

A survey of these documents reveals that most of the Persian documents (*sanads* as well as *parwanas*) were issued by the Mughal administrators and/or the officials appointed by the Afghan rulers. The

earliest of the Persian documents from Chamba corresponds to the period of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan whereas the last document relates to the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.⁶⁶

The Persian documents relating to the Chamba rulers range from the rule of Raja Prithvi Singh (1641-1664 A.D.) to Raja Raj Singh (1764-1794 A.D.). The ruler-wise classification is as under:

Raja Prithvi Singh (2); Raja Chatar Singh (1); Raja Dalel Singh (4); Raja Umed Singh (7); and Raja Raj Singh (2). The texts of the six documents alongwith the English translation has already been published in the catalogue referred to above.

These documents provide useful information about the administrative as well as the agrarian history of the region. The territories of the conquered chieftains were considered as a part of the Mughal empire. Very rarely their *zamindari* rights were confirmed and they were also obliged to pay *peshkash* (revenues) and even render military service to the sovereign power.⁶⁷

It is quite interesting to note that some of the documents issued by the Sikh rulers of the Punjab to the hill chiefs of Himachal Pradesh are in Persian. These may be listed as under:

- I. Letter from Raja Raj Singh of Chamba to the Sikhs for restoration of some territories. The Persian letter bears seal in Gurmukhi.(undated).
- II. Letter in Persian dated 27th *Jeth* V.S. 1878. Letter of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Raja Charat Singh of Chamba (1808-1844 A.D).
- III. *Sanad* dated 1st of *Har* V.S. 1881 regarding confirmation of some villages as *jagir* to Wazir Nathu of Chamba.
- IV. *Parwana* in Persian dated 1st *Poh* V.S. 1891 bearing the seal of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Refers to Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, then *subedar* of Kangra about the grant of a village as *jagir*.
- V. *Parwana* in Persian dated 3rd of *Har*, V.S. 1884. Forbids the *kardars* from interfering with the *jagir* of Inder Singh, son of Wazir Nathu of Chamba.

- VI. Letter in Persian dated 29th of *Phalgun*, V.S. 1902. Informs Raja Sri Singh of Chamba about the British control of his State. The letter bears the seal of Maharaja Dalip Singh in Gurmukhi.⁸⁹

As against the available Persian documents, the documents in Tankari throw light on the hierarchy of the chiefs in this region. In many cases the weaker states were made vassals by the stronger ones. Chamba being one of the powerful states in the region, very often exercised a suzerain claim over most of the adjoining weaker states.⁹⁰

The Tankari documents are mostly relating to the financial matters.⁹⁰ These documents are of varied nature. Some of them deal with the recovery of the amount on account of revenues or pertaining to loans and debts. Some throw light on the rate of interest on various accounts whereas a few documents tell us that money was often paid for the assistance lent by the neighbouring chief. The names of the seller and the purchaser are known from some of the sale deeds relating to land.⁹¹

SECONDARY SOURCES, INCLUDING MODERN WORKS, VANSHAVALIS, CATALOGUES, GAZETTEERS AND RESEARCH DISSERTATIONS ETC.

The secondary sources for the history of Himachal Pradesh include modern works concerning the Mughals and Sikhs, Punjab and Himachal Histories, Biographies of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, *Vanshavalis* of the various hill chiefs; Catalogues, Gazetteers, Research Dissertations and other periodical literature.

POLITICAL HISTORIES

A number of monographs have been written on the erstwhile hill states of Punjab, which now form a part of the modern State of Himachal Pradesh. The first pioneer attempt in this direction was made by J. Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel who produced a monumental work entitled: *History of the Punjab Hill States* in two volumes (Lahore, 1933, Shimla reprint, 1982). The chapters in these two volumes first appeared as separate research articles in the Journal of the Punjab Historical Society, between 1914 and 1931. Some of the other important modern works dealing with the history of Himachal Pradesh are:
 Man Mohan: *A History of Mandi State* (Lahore, 1930);
 Balak Ram Sud, *Tarikh-i-Handur Nalagarh* (Urdu), Lahore, 1895

Hardyal Singh, *Tarikh-i-Riyasat-ha-i-Kohistan-i-Punjab*, (Urdu), Moradabad, 1886.

Raghunath Singh, *Tarikh-i-Rajgan-i-Pathania-i-Nurpur, Zilla Kangra*, (Urdu), Amritsar, n.d.

Diwan Sarb Dyal, *Tarikh-i-Rajgan-i-Handur*, (Urdu, MSS.) Ujagar Singh, *Twarikh-i-Rajgan-i-Handur*, (Urdu, MSS), 1867 in possession of Dr. Ganda Singh, Patiala.

Anonymous, *Tarikh-i-Riyasat-i-Jubbal* (Urdu, MSS);

M.S. Ahluwalia and others: *Himachal Past Present and Future*, (H.P. University, Shimla, 1975);

Sukhdev Singh Charak, *History and Culture of the Himalayan States*, 5 Vols (New Delhi, 1978-80);

R.K. Kaushal, *Himachal Pradesh* (Bombay, 1965);

H.K. Mittoo, *Himachal Pradesh* (Shimla, 1977);

S.S. Shashi: *Himachal, Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971); Akshar Singh, *Bilaspur Ki Kahani*, (Hindi), Bilaspur, 1941; L.C. Prarthi, *Kulut Desh Ki Kahani* (Hindi), Kulu, n.d. Rahul Sankritayan, *Kinner Pradesh* (Hindi), Allahabad, 1957; Akshar Singh: *Tarikh Wa Gugraphia Riyasat Bilaspur, Kahlur* (Urdu).;

Bhagwan Das, *Tawarikh Jubbal Kohistan Simla* (Urdu), Simla, 1895.

Diwan Rai Bhagwant, *Bahare Kumarsain* (Delhi, 1930), Urdu.

Ranzor Singh: *Tarikh-i-Riyasat Sirmur* (Urdu), Allahabad, 1912.

Anand Chand, Raja: *Bilaspur: Past Present and Future*, Delhi, 1954.

E.J. Buck: *Simla Past and Present* (Calcutta, 1904); Delhi Reprint, 1980.

Chetwode, P. Kulu: *The End of Habitable World*, (London, 1972); C.L. Datta: *Ladakh and Western Himalayan Politics*, (Delhi, 1973);

U.S. Kumar: *Gurkha Conquest of Arki*, (Lahore, 1903);

V.C. Ohri: *Himachal Art and Archaeology*, (Simla, 1980);

L.P. Pandey: *Ancient Himachal: History, Religion and Culture*, (Delhi, 1981);

Mian Goverdhan Singh: *History of Himachal Pradesh* (Delhi, 1980).

Apart from the above listed books on various erstwhile princely states of Himachal Pradesh, a number of monographs on Ranjit Singh and general histories about the Sikhs and the Punjab also contain useful information about the Himachal history.⁹²

Vanshavalis

In case of Himachal Pradesh, an important source of information

are, the *Vanshavalis* which, in some cases give us a peep into the pre-historic centuries. From ancient times, it has been the custom in several royal and noble families of the hill states to keep a careful record of their pedigree in the shape of the *Vanshavalis*. Such documents are common in the hill states and were preserved with so much care that it was often with great difficulty that one could get it to have a look into it for historical details. The *Vanshavalis* were generally composed by the *Rajguru* or the royal priest and the office being hereditary, these remained from age to age in the custody of the same family. Some of them are of doubtful value. However, most of them possess the accuracy of historical records. The principal part of a *Vanshavali* consists of a long list of the names of the Rajas (often partly mythologically), who are believed to have ruled in succession beginning with the founder of the ruling house.

Many of the *Vanshavalis* contain a little more than the genealogy i.e. some personal details of the family members also. William Moorcroft says that he saw the *Vanshavali* of Raja Sansar Chand Katoch of Kangra in 1820 A.D.⁹³ and the pedigree is written in verse and contains in general a little more than the birth and death of each male individual of the family.

These official *Vanshavalis* of each state are usually in Sanskrit verse. In many cases the *Vanshavalis* contain names which are known from other epigraphical and literary sources also.⁹⁴

Works on Antiquities, Temple Art and Paintings etc.

As stated earlier, the district of Chamba is very rich in antiquities. Professor Jean Phillippe Vogel presented a complete record of early inscriptions in his monumental work, *Antiquities of Chamba State*,⁹⁵ Part-I. The account is completed by B.C. Chhabra, who conducted the epigraphic survey from the Turkish period to the modern times in his work entitled: *Antiquities of Chamba State*,⁹⁶ Part-II.

Hermen Goetz has discussed the archaeological remains of Chamba in his work, *The Early Wooden Temples of Chamba*.⁹⁷ Madanjit Singh has discussed the temple art of Chamba and Mandi in his work, *Himalayan Art*.⁹⁸ Western Himalayan Art finds place in Hermen Goetz book, *Studies in History and Art of Kashmir and the Indian Himalaya*.⁹⁹ The latest works on Himachal art and archaeology are by Mian Goverdhan Singh and V.C. Ohri, *Himachal Art and Archaeology*.¹⁰⁰

The art of painting in the hills existed even before the emergence of the so-called 'Basohli School of Painting' (during the late seventeenth and whole of the eighteenth century). The patronage extended by the various chiefs of the hill states led to the refined extence of a Pahari painting. Chronologically, the following works have appeared on the various phases of the Pahari painting:

- A.K. Coomaraswamy: *Rajput Painting* (Oxford, 1916);
- Joseph Charles French: *Himalayan Art* (London, 1931);
- W.G. Archer: *Kangra Painting* (London, 1952);
- W.G. Archer: *Indian Paintings in the Punjab Hills* (London, 1952);
- Karl Khandalwala: *Pahari Miniature Painting* (Bombay, 1958);
- M.S. Randhawa: *Kangra Valley Painting* (Delhi, 1954);
- M.S. Randhawa: *Basholi Painting* (Delhi, 1959);
- M.S. Randhawa: *Chamba Painting* (Delhi, 1967);
- M.S. Randhawa: *Maharaja Sansar Chand, the Patron of Kangra Painting* (New Delhi, 1970);
- K.C. Vaidya and O.C. Handa: *Pahari Chitrakala* (Hindi), Delhi, 1969
- B.N. Goswami: *Social Background of the Kangra Valley Paintings* (Punjab University, Chandigarh, Ph.D. Thesis).

Apart from the above listed monographs, a large volume of literature in the form of research dissertations,¹⁰¹ relevant to the history of Himachal Pradesh, has been and is being written by the scholars in Himachal Pradesh and other universities. The Gazetteers¹⁰² concerning the various districts of Himachal Pradesh, published from time to time as well as periodical literature¹⁰³ may also serve the purpose of scholars involved in writing the political or socio-economic history of Himachal Pradesh.

Recently about two dozen documents in Persian have been acquired by the Museum authorities of the Himachal State Museum, Shimla which are being catalogued. These documents concern mainly during the period of the later Mughals and deal with the land grants and other subjects. The erstwhile *Thakurai* of Kunihar (District Solan) and the priestly families of the Jwala Mukhi temple at Kangra¹⁰⁴ are also in possession of a few Persian documents which have not so far been utilized by the scholars working on the history of Himachal Pradesh.¹⁰⁵

Notes & References

- (1) 'Himalaya' is derived from the word 'Him' meaning snow and 'Alya' meaning an abode i.e. the house or home of snow. Himalaya is supreme amongst the mountains of the world. Kalidasa described it as 'Devatma Himalaya', whereas as Lord Krishna said in the *Bhagwata Gita*, 'Among mountains, I am the Himalaya... Its grandeur and mysteries have influenced all the spheres of life of the people of India since times immemorial.'
 - (2) The Jalandhar Khand corresponds to one of the five divisions of the western Himalayas which has been described as Jalandhar (or Trigarta); Champaka (or Chamba); Kuluta (or Kulu); Lahul and Satadru.
- Rahul Sankritayan, *Himalaya Parichaya-Garhwal*(1) (Allahabad, 1953), p.1.
- (3) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh* (Delhi, 1982), p.9.
 - (4) The Himachal region (33 22' 40" - 30 12' 40" N and 75 47' 55" - 79 04' 22" E) has an area of 55,673 Kms and a population of 34,60,434 (1971) covering the state of Himachal Pradesh. Administratively Himachal is divided into 12 districts : Solan, Kinnaur, Mandi, Chamba, Sirmur, Bilaspur, Shimla, Kangra, Kulu, Lahul & Spiti, Una and Hamirpur. The total area of the state is 55,673 sq.kms. It is located between the Ravi in the west and Yamuna in the east. Its greatest length is 355 km from the north-western extremity of Chamba to the south-eastern tip of Kinnaur and maximum breadth is 270 km from Kangra in near south-west to Kinnaur in the near north-east. K.L. Joshi, *Geography of Himachal Pradesh* (Delhi, 1984) p.1.
 - (5) For physical geography and geology of the Shiwalik range of the Himalayas see also E.T. Atkinson, *Geology of the Himalayas* (New Delhi, 1980), pp.63, 67, 84.
 - (6) For a list of twenty important passes in Himachal Pradesh see K.L. Joshi, *op.cit.*, Table-I.
 - (7) For four major concentrations of galciers over the Zaskar and great Himalayan ranges see K.L. Joshi, *op.cit.*, pp. 17-18.
 - (8) For details about rivers see K.L. Joshi, *Geography of Himachal Pradesh* (Delhi, 1984), pp. 19-29.

- (9) *Techno-Economic Survey of Himachal Pradesh*, National Council of Applied Economic Research (New Delhi, 1981), p.1.
- (10) Bhagal, Baghat, Baislon, Bhajji, Beja, Bushahr, Chamba, Darkoti, Dhami, Jubbal, Keonthal, Kumarsain, Kunihar, Kuthar, Mahlog, Mandi, Mangal, Sangri, Sirmur, Suket and Tharoch.
- (11) V.P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, (New Jersey, 1957), p.299.
- (12) *Report on the Working of the Ministry of States*, 1949.
- (13) The pre-British Punjab States may be broadly divided into two major categories of plain and the hill states. The hill states which were of Hindu origin included the twenty one East Punjab Hill States (see foot note:10). The Punjab states included the Sikh States of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Kapurthala, Kalsia, and the Muslim states of Bahawalpur, Dujana, Khairpur, Loharu, Malerkotla and Pataudi.
- (14) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, (Delhi, 1982), p.28; Much of the information about the sources of the History of Himachal Pradesh in the present chapter has been extracted from the Bibliographies concerning the history of the Punjab, notably by Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Punjab*, (Patiala, 1966); Ikram Ali Malik, *A Bibliography of the Punjab and its Dependencies*, (Lahore, 1968); E.W. Gustafson and Kenneth W. Jones; and Mian Goverdhan Singh's *Bibliography of Himachal Pradesh* (unpublished).
- (15) Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, Eng. tr. M. Stein, London, 1900.
- (16) Abu Nasar Utbi, *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, Arabic text, ed. Ali and Sprenger, Delhi, 1947. Extracts translated into English by H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. II, Allahabad, 1978; Khwand Mir, *Habib-us-Siyar*, text, Tehran, 1955, Bombay, 1957, tr. Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV; Ferishta, *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, text Lucknow, 1867, tr. J. Briggs, 4 vols. Calcutta, 1910.
- (17) Minhajuddin Siraj, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Persian text, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1864, Kabul text (ed.) Abdul Hai Habibi, 1342 A.H., Eng. tr. H.A. Raverty, 2 Vols., Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1864; Barani, *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*, Persian text, Calcutta, 1862, Aligarh text, Vol. I, Aligarh, 1957 and Extracts tr. into English by Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol. III.
- (18) Badr-i-Chach, *Qasaид* with Urdu commentary by Abdul Majid Khan, Lucknow, n.d.
- (19) Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, text, 3 Vols., ed. B.Dey, Calcutta, 1931-35.
- (20) Shahnawaz Khan, *Muasir-ul-Umara*, 2 Vols. ed. Maulavi Abdur Rahim, Calcutta, 1885 and 1890, Vol. 3 edited by Maulavi Mirza Ashraf Ali, Calcutta, 1891.

- (21) Jahangir, emperor, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, ed. Sayyed Ahmed Khan, Ghazipur and Aligarh, 1863-64.
- (22) Anonymous, *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi*. Written in 1310 A.D. Appears to have been written at the direction of Sultan Firoz Shah. *Mss* in Bankipur Library, Pains.
- (23) Jalal Tabatabai, *Shash Fateh Kangra*, Rotograph, Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.
- (24) *Dharam Chand Natak* was written by one Manik Chand in 1562 A.D. The author was the bard of Raja Dharam Chand.
- (25) Timur, *Tuzuk-i-Timuri*. It is a biography of Amir Timur and appears to have been written under his direction. The original was written in Turkish and was translated into Persian by Abu Talib Husaini during the period of emperor Shahjahan in seventeenth century.
- (26) Rizqullah Mushtaqi, *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, British Museum *Ms*, Ad. 11633, Extracts tr. Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol.IV: *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana* of Ahmad Yadgar. Printed by Asiatic Society of Bengal under the title, *Tarikh-i-Shahi*; text also edited by Shaikh Abdur Rashid, Aligarh, 1954; Extracts tr. in Elliot and Dowson's' *op.cit.*, Vol. IV; *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghara* also known as *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahan-i-Lodi*, text edited by S.M. Imam Ali Din, Dacca, 1960, Bankipur and Aligarh *Mss*; Eng. Tr. by Dom; Extracts tr. in Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV; and Abduallah, *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, text edited by Shaikh Abdur Rashid, Aligarh, 1954; Bankipur *Ms*. are some of the well known Afghan sources which throw considerable light on the Afghan rulers' relations with the hill states of Himachal Pradesh.
- (27) Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, text 3 Vols, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1877, 1879, 1886 Eng. tr. by H. Beveridge, Calcutta, reprint, Extracts tr. in Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol. VI; *Ain-i-Akbari*, 3 parts, Bib-Ind., Calcutta, 1872-73, Eng. tr. by Blochmann and Jarrett, 1891-1894.
- (28) Badauni, *Mutakhab-ul-Tawarikh*, text 3 Vols. Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1864, 1868-69, Eng. tr. Ranking, Calcutta, 1898.
- (29) Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, text edited by B. De, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1931, 1935.
- (30) Jahangir (emperor), *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Eng. tr. by Rogers and Beveridge, Delhi, 1968.
- (31) *The Adi-Granth*. The original compilation of Guru Arjun consisted of the hymns of the first five Gurus and those of several Bhagats and Bards. Eng. tr. Gopal Singh Dardi, 4 Vols., Delhi, 1960; Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth*, London, 1971; Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, 6 Vols., Oxford, 1909.
- (32) There are many *Janam Sakhis* (or the biographies of Guru Nanak, the founder of

- the Sikh religion) in existence such as *Janam Sakhi* by Bhai Bala; *Wilayat Wali Janam Sakhi*, written by Sewa Das in 1588 A.D.; *Hafizabad Wali Janam Sakhi* and about half a dozen other *Janam Sakhis*.
- (33) *Bachitar Natak* written by Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs, and incorporated in his compilation known as *Dasam Patshah Ka Granth* or *Dasam Granth*. It was written at Anandpur Sahib between 1674 and 1704 A.D. See Bhai Balbir Singh, *Shabdarakh Dasam Granth* (Patiala, 1973) and D.P. Ashta, *Poetry of Guru Granth*, Delhi, 1959.
- (34) *Gur Bilas* of Bhai Sukha Singh, comp. in 1797 A.D.
- (35) *Gur Sobha* of Kavi Senapati, Amritsar, 1925 (comp. V.S. 1758/1701 A.D.) ed. Akali Kaur Singh, Amritsar, 1925. Mohsin Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mazahab*, ext. Calcutta, 1809; tr. by Troyer and Shea and also by Dr. Ganda Singh.
- (36) Among the other contemporary and later Sikh literary sources, mention may be made of: *Suraj Parkash* of Bhai Santokh Singh (ed. Bhai Vir Singh, Amritsar, 1914); *Sri Guru Panth Paraksh* by Gyani Gyan Singh (Amritsar, 1980) etc.
- (37) A letter written by the Guru (Gobind Singh) is respectfully called as a *Hukamnama*, or a letter of Command. Such letters are mostly addressed to the Sikhs at different places. For example, one *Hukamnama* dated 19 February 1694 A.D., orders the (Sikh) *Sangat* to bring guns on the day of Baisakhi; the *Hukamnama* dated 2nd August, 1696, refers to the anxious days of Guru Gobind Singh in the hills. In the *Hukamnama* dated 2nd October, 1707, the Guru expressed his desire to come back to Anandpur (Sahib) and directed the *Sarbat Khalsa* to come fully armed when he (the Guru) returns to Kahlur (modern Bilaspur). For details about these and other *Hukamnames* see Ganda Singh (ed.) *Hukamname* (Punjabi), Patiala, 1967.
- (38) Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* (1134 A.H.), text Asiatic Society Bengal, Calcutta, 1874, 2 Vols., tr. Elliot and Dowson, *op.cit.*, Vol. VII.
- (39) Ghulam Hussain, *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin* (1782 A.D.); text Cawnpore, 1897; Calcutta, 1936; Eng. tr. by M. Raymond, 3 Vols, Calcutta, 1902.
- (40) Sujan Rai Bhandari, *Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh* (1695 A.D.), ed. and published by M. Zafar Hasan (Delhi, 1918); tr. in Jadu Nath Sarkar's *India of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1901; Punjabi tr. by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1973.
- (41) Tahmas Khan, *Tahmas nama*, MSS. British Museum. Ad. 24033. (was written in 1814 A.D.); MSS. also available in the Khalsa College, Amritsar and Dr. Ganda Singh's personal collection, Patiala.
- (42) Bakht Mal, *Khalsa Nama*, British Museum MSS; Also available in Khalsa College, Amritsar and with Dr. Ganda Singh.
- (43) Khushwaqt Rai *Tarikh-i-Sikhan* (written in 1812 A.D.); MSS. in Khalsa College, Amritsar and Dr. Ganda Singh's Personal collection.

- (44) Aliuddin Mufti, *Ibrat Nama* (1854 A.D.), MSS. Khalsa College, Amritsar, text published by the *Punjabi Adabi Academy*, Lahore, 2 Vols., 1961, and in the personal collection of the writer.
- (45) *Mss* copies of Ganesh Das and Bute Shah's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* are available in the Khalsa College, Amritsar.
- (46) Ed. Ganda Singh, Amritsar, 1951.
- (47) *Mss.* Punjab Public Library, Lahore. It is an important source for getting a glimpse of the state of affairs in the Kangra hills.
- (48) *Mss.* in personal collection of Dr. Ganda Singh, Patiala. It contains treaties and engagements of the Rajas of the hill states and of Sultan Muhammad Barakzai with the Lahore Durbar.
- (49) Lahore, 1976; *Mss.* copy in Khalsa College, Amritsar.
- (50) In 5 vols (Lahore 1885-1889 A.D.); Vol. I, 1526 to 1828 V.S. (contains the account from Guru Nanak to Ahmad Shah Durrani; Vol. III in five parts (contains the diaries of Maharaja Ranjit Singh for the years 1831-1839 A.D.; Eng. tr. by V.S. Suri, Delhi, 1965.
- (51) *Mss.* in possession of Maharaja Yadvindra Singh of Patiala.
- (52) *Mss.* available in Bhai Dit Singh Library, Ferozpur.
- (53) It deals with the events of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign from 1800 to 1836-37 A.D. The author was the son of Raja Dina Nath, an influential courtier of the Maharaja. Ed. Sita Ram Kohli, Lahore, 1928.
- (54) Deals with the history of Sikhs from the time of Gurus to the third quarter of the 18th century.
- (55) Ed. Dr. Kirpal Singh, Amritsar, 1965.
- (56) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, pp. 28-29.
- (57) J. Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, No. 80, Plate XLIV 'Nirmand Copper Plate Inscription of Mahasamanta Samudrasena', p.286; R.P. Yadav, Some observations on the Nirmand Copper Plate of Maharaj Samudrasen of Kulu, *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay*, Vol. 47-48 (1977), pp. 75-6. For reference to Asoka and other inscriptions see L.P. Pandey, *Ancient Himachal, History, Religion and Culture*, (New Delhi, 1981), Chapt.II.
- (58) The author is thankful to his pupil Dr. Laxman S. Thakur for supplying a

typescript of his article 'Sources of the Ancient History of Himachal Pradesh' being published in the *Sources of the History of India*, Vol. V by the Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta. The information is largely based on the above article for sources, particularly archaeological and epigraphic, for the ancient History of Himachal Pradesh.

- (59) The exploration done by Professor B.B. Lal in June, 1955 yielded seventy-two stone tools known as handaxes, 'unifacial' choppers, cores and flakes. For details see B.B. Lal 'Palaeoliths from the Beas and Banganga valleys, Punjab' *Ancient India*, No. 12, 1956, pp. 59-92.
- (60) Surveys were carried out in 1957, 1966, 1967 and 1968 and reports have been published by the Department of Language and Culture, H.P. Government under the title, *Pre-History of Himachal Pradesh*, edited by V.C. Ohri, Simla, 1979.
- (61) Pathiyar inscription was discovered by J.Ph. Vogel and is dated to the 2nd century B.C. see *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VII, p.116. It has been placed in the beginning of the first century A.D. by Stern Konow. See *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol.II, prt. i, p. 178. The Kanihara inscriptions (two) were discovered by Sir E.C. Bayley, See *J.A.S.B.*, vol.III, p.116. For Salanu (Salari) inscription see H.N. Sastri, 'Historical Documents of Kulu', *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1907-08 (Calcutta, 1911), pp. 260-76. The Salari inscription is dated 4th century A.D. For Hat Koti inscription see V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Art and Archaeology of Himachal Pradesh*, State Museum, Simla, 1980, pp.34-35. For reference to Asoka and other inscriptions see also Laxman S. Thakur, *op.cit.*, pp. 5-11 and L.P. Pandey, *Ancient Himachal: History, Religion and Culture*, (New Delhi, 1918), Chapter II.
- (62) J.Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, No. 80, Plate XLIV, p.286; *Royal Asiatic Society of Bomaby*, Vol. 47-48 (1977), pp. 75-86; J.Ph.Vogel, *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1903-04, pp. 261-69.
- (63) *Catalogue, Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba*, ed. J.Ph. Vogel (Calcutta, 1909), Nos.B-I,II.
- (64) *Ibid.*, B-36. Copper Plate of V.S. 1845 (1778 A.D.) records the treaty between Raj Singh of Chamba and Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra. Five copper-plate inscriptions issued between 950 and 1085 A.D. by different rulers of Chamba and dealing mostly with land-grants, are available in the Chamba Museum.
- (65) *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, p. 120, No. XVIII; *Ibid.*, pp. 118-19, No. XVII.
- (66) The *Prasasti* No.2 gives us detailed genealogy of the Kangra rulers. *Archaeological Survey of India*, Vol. V, pp. 180-81; Laxman S. Thakur, *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, Bodh-Gaya, December, 1981, pp. 136-41.
- (67) This undeciphered inscription was noticed by Laxman S. Thakur who assigns its period to the 10th century, A.D. For the text of the inscriptions found at Kunihara,

- Baijnath, and old Kangra see Dilip K. Chakrabarti and S.J. Hasan, *The Antiquities of Kangra*, pp. 61-72.
- (68) *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XVIII, p.99 (for Gwalior prasasti); *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 186-88 (for Pehowa inscription); and *Ibid.*, p.129 and *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol.IX, 1933, pp. 11-17 (for reference to Kira Kingdom).
- (69) For details about the *sati* inscriptions see also chapter V, *Himachal and the Sikhs*.
- (70) For a detailed account of temples see Laxman S. Thakur, *Temple Architecture in Ancient Himachal*, M.Phil (History) dissertation (unpublished); H.P. University, Simla, 1980; See also *Ibid*, *Temple Architecture in Himachal Pradesh from the earliest times to the Fourteenth century A.D.*, Ph.D. Thesis, H.P. University, Simla, 1984 (unpublished).
- (71) Twenty-five of these coins are preserved in the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba while twelve are kept in State Museum, Shimla.
- (72) *Proceedings of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1893, pp. 11-12; Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India Reports*, 1878-79, Vol. XIV, pp. 137-39. *Indian Archaeology - A Review*, 1970-71, p.61.
- (73) Cunningham, *op.cit.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 137-39.
- (74) *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Numismatic Supplement*, Vol. XXIII, p. 247 ff; Cunningham, *op.cit.* Audumbara coins have also been recently discovered from Chakkar in district Mandi.
- (75) John Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol. I, pp. 170,213; Vol. II, pp. 787,820, Vol. II, pl.243 Nos.252-57.
- (76) K.K. Das Gupta, *A Tribal History of Ancient India: A Numismatic Approach*, (Calcutta, 1974), pp. 71-87.
- (77) V.A. Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta, Vol. I, (Oxford, 1906), p.165.
- (78) V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Arts of Himachal*, (Simla, 1975), p.218: See also K.K. Thaplyal, 'Gleanings from Tribal Coins of Himachal Pradesh(c. 2nd century B.C. to 5th century A.D.)' in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Himachal Art and Archaeology : Some Aspects*, pp. 7-16.
- (79) L.P. Pandey, *Ancient Himachal: History, Religion and Culture*, (New Delhi, 1981), pp. 26-27. See also P.L. Gupta, *Coins* (New Delhi, 1969); D.C. Sircar, *A Study of Indian Coins* (Delhi, 1968); R.B. Whitehead, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore*, Vol. I, (Oxford, 1914) and A. Cunningham, *Coins of Medieval India*, (New Delhi, reprint, 1967). For a detailed list of coins found

- in the Kangra area see Dilip K. Chakrabarti and S.J. Hasan, *The Antiquities of Kangra*, pp. 57-60.
- (80) Hiuen Tsang, *Si-yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London, 1884), Reprint, 1969.
- (81) Asha Chauhan, *Himachal Through the Eyes of Foreign Travellers*, M. Phil (History) Dissertation, H.P. University, Shimla, 1985 (unpublished), p.3.
- (82) *Ibid.* For details about the various foreign travellers who passed through Himachal Pradesh, the observations of six (*viz.*, George Forster, J.B. Fraser, A.P.F. Harcourt, B.C. Hugel, William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, Thomas Thomson and G.T. Vigne) have been studied in detail by Asha Chauhan in her dissertation.
- (83) Cited in Barbara Ramusack, 'The Princely States of Punjab : A Bibliographical Essay' in W.E. Gustafson and K.W. Jones (ed.) *Sources on Punjab History*, Delhi, 1975, p. 417.
- (84) B.R. Grover's cyclostyled paper entitled 'Institutional Relationship between the Sovereign State and the Punjab Hill Chieftainship based on the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba Documents', *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, Bombay, 1980.
- (85) This change was possibly due to the disintegration of the Mughal authority in the hills and the consequent decline of its hold in the Punjab Hill States.
- (86) It is an undated letter (about the time of the Second Sikh War) informing Raja Sri Singh of Chamba about the approach of the British forces intending to encamp at Chari. (See *Bhuri Singh Museum Catalogue*, No. C.72). For five other Persian documents issued by the Sikh rulers of the Punjab see *Ibid.*, Nos. C.20; C.59; C.60.; C.61 and C.65.
- (87) *Bhuri Singh Museum Catalogue*, Appendix III, Persian *sandads*, pp. 52-65. The Chamba documents reveal that in case of territorial disputes, these had to be referred to the Mughal court. In some cases, the relations of these chieftains had to remain at the Mughal court under surveillance as security against any recalcitrance. B.R. Grover, *op.cit.*, p.7. See for example Document No. C.1-2 dated 19th Safar A.H. 1058/5th March 1648 A.D relating to the boundary dispute between the *zamindars* of Basohli and Chamba.
- (88) For the above six documents in Persian see *Bhuri Singh Museum Chamba Catalogue*, S.Nos. C.20; C.59; C.60; C.61; C.65 and C.71 respectively. Apart from these documents in Persian, the Bhuri Singh Museum preserves one letter in Gurmukhi which is dated 20th *Asuj* V.S. 1846, wherein Bhai Amar Singh promises to act in favour of Chamba and Raja Jit Singh. *Catalogue*, S.No. C.41.
- (89) V.K. Jhingta : *A Survey of source-material pertaining to the History of Chamba during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries*. H.P. University Shimla, M.Phil (History) Dissertation, 1982 (unpublished), p.123.

- (90) *Ibid.* See for example *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, S.Nos. C.23,27,26,43; S.No. 78.30; 78.28; 77.42; 77.67 and 77.44; 77.46; 77.55; 77.69; 77.84; 77.85; 77.15; 78.23 and 78.26 for documents in Tankari relating to financial matters.
- (91) See for example Document Nos. 77.77 in the *Bhuri Singh Museum Catalogue*, Chamba.
- (92) For further details see *Bibliography* at the end of the book.
- (93) William Moorcroft: *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindostan and the Punjab etc.*, (London, 1841); Vol. I, p.145. Moorcroft remained in India from 1819 to 1825. Maharaja Sansar Chand showed Moorcroft the long genealogy and the latter also tried to obtain a copy of the same. He promised that he would supply a copy of the *vanshavali* on his return journey. Unluckily he died and could never receive the same.
- (94) Sir Alexander Cunningham also recognised the importance of the *vanshavalis*. About the *vanshavali* of Kangra house, Cunningham observed that the genealogy from the time of the founder, Susharma Chandra appeared to have a much stronger claim to our belief that any of the long strings of names shown by more powerful families of Rajputana. See Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p.3. Capt. Harcourt (who remained Assistant Commissioner of Kulu from April 1869 to March 1871) has added the *vanshavali* of Kulu Rajas in his book *Himalayan Districts of Kooloo, Lahoul and Spiti*. (Delhi reprint, 1982, pp. 113-15). Similarly Hutchison and Vogel have also given the lists of the Rajas of Kangra, Nurpur, Mandi, Suket, Chamba, etc. in their book *History of Punjab Hill States*, (2 vols., Simla reprint, 1982). See also R.K. Bhargava, 'The Punjab and the Hill Rajas', M.Phil (History) Dissertation, H.P. University, Shimla, 1986 (unpublished), pp. 22-24.
- (95) Part-I, Calcutta, 1911.
- (96) Part-II, Delhi, 1957.
- (97) Leidon, 1955. See also *Catalogue* of Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba, which includes a large number of plate inscriptions, sculptures, woodcarvings and textiles.
- (98) Madanjit Singh, *Himalayan Art* (Greenwhich, 1968).
- (99) Wiesbaden, 1968.
- (100) Simla, 1980.
- (101) The research dissertations have been mentioned in the relevant chapters.
- (102) See *Bibliography* at the end, *Part II*.
- (103) *Ibid., part I*
- (104) Based on information supplied by Dr. Navin Sharma of Shimla who has gone through these documents.
- (105) For further details see *Bibliography* at the end.

CHAPTER - II

THE EARLY POLITICAL HISTORY

**STONE AGE TO TRIBAL REPUBLICS
IMPERIAL GUPTAS TO RAJPUT STATES**

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY POLITICAL HISTORY

A. STONE AGE TO TRIBAL REPUBLICS

The early political history of Himachal Pradesh is not fully established. This is mainly due to the absence of adequate archaeological and literary sources. Some recent explorations and researches however, have thrown significant light on the political and cultural history of the state going as far back as the pre-historic age.

Traces of Human Existence

The geological explorations prove that as early as two million years ago, at least one form of man lived on the Himachal foot-hills, in the Nalagarh-Suketi region and in the Kalpa valley of Kinnaur. Fossils of the various animals discovered from some regions of Himachal Pradesh testify to the growth of marshy land, lakes and human life.¹ The archaeological surveys so far carried out, clearly point out the human existence in the area traversed by the Banganga-Beas valleys of Kangra, the Sirsa-Sutlej valleys of Nalagarh-Bilaspur and the Markanda valley of Sirmur.²

The archaeological surveys conducted by Professor B.B.Lal³ and R.V. Joshi⁴ traces back the history of Himachal Pradesh to the late stages of the palaeolithic period. The explorations in the Suketi-Nalagarh area and Guler region of Kangra have yielded a large number of stone-implements.

The Stone Age

The human existence in the Himachal Pradesh is also testified by the discovery of large stone tools like pebbles, choppers, hand-axes and

flakes which are found embodied in the fang-shaped boulders and gravels in the Shiwalik foothills at Guler, Dehra, Dhaliara and Kangra in the Beas valley; Bilaspur and Nalagarh in the Sirsa-Sutlej valley and Suketi area of the Markanda valley of Sirmur. The rock commonly used for these implements were quartzite. The most interesting tool is a bifacially worked scaper on thin oval flake obtained from the quartzite pebble. These artifacts generally show advanced Acheulian characters. The sophistry of the bifacial scaper indicates the existence of an early middle palaeolithic culture in the area. On the basis of typological comparisons with similar tools found in the Indian peninsular region, the tools from the Markanda and Sirsa-Sutlej valleys etc., seem to be at least forty thousand years old.⁵

Settled Life

The traces of settled life in the Himachal Pradesh have also been found from a place called Ror in the Kangra district. The stone-tools⁶ found here are axes, chisles, picks, axe-hammers and rig-stones which date back to the post -Pleistocene period and indicate the existence of a settled community life, wherein the man used earthen pots and pans, domesticated animals and produced food through agriculture and breeding of live-stock etc.⁷

The Indus Civilization

The Indus civilization is generally believed to have flourished between 3000 to 1750 B.C. and covered the entire area extending from the Arabian sea to the Gangetic valley in the east. It covered the whole of Punjab as far as the Himalayan foot-hills apart from Rajasthan and Gujarat in the south. It is believed that when the inhabitants of the Indus valley spread through the Sarswati and Gangetic plains, they pushed forward the Munda speaking Kolorian people who used to inhabit this part earlier.

Kolorians - The Earliest Inhabitants

The Kolorian people were forced to migrate to the forests and difficult valleys of the Himalayas.⁹ With the passage of time this race spread themselves over the whole of the western and central Himalayas. They lived in groups and had their own language and indigenous beliefs.¹⁰

Traces of Indus Valley civilization are found in Ropar which is located near the hills of Himachal Pradesh. This must have influenced the life of the hills, then inhabited by these people.¹¹

During the Rig-Vedic period, these people were called Dasas, Dasyus, Nishadas etc. Literary sources also refer to Kinnaras, Nagas and Yakshas who migrated to the hills of Himachal Pradesh during the post-Vedic period. However, the Kols, also known as Mundas, are stated to be the earliest original migrants to the Himachal hills and possibly the Kolis, Halis, Dums and Chanals of the Western Himalayas and the Chamangs and Damangs of Kinnaur, Lahul and Spiti are the remnants of this race.¹²

The Indo-Aryans and Indo-Mongoloids

The second group of people were of the Aryan origin. They were known as the Khasas who penetrated from the north-west and settled in the mid-mountain belt of the Himalayas from Kashmir to Nepal. They developed a specific Indo-Iranian culture and religion in their Central Asian home and their more adventurous band turned to the east and after crossing the Hindukush, came as far as the Indus valley which they called Sapta-Sindhu or the land of seven rivers. The date of arrival of the Aryans in this region is estimated at about two thousand B.C.

From the Indus Valley, the Aryans moved generally in a north-easterly direction, crossed Punjab and moved up to the foothills of the Himalayas from where they turned towards the Saraswati, Yamuna and Ganga valleys. The dark-skinned dwellers of the soil, whom the Aryans called Dasyus, offered a strong resistance to the invaders. One of the powerful Dasyu kings was Shambara, whom *Rig-Veda* mentions as the greatest enemy of the Aryans. After fighting for about forty years, the Aryans defeated Shambara. Some of the Dasyu tribes retreated towards the north and maintained a precarious existence in the hills under the supremacy of the Khasas. The Aryans mostly spread through the plains and the northern limit of their extension touched only the Shiwalik foothills.¹³

The Mongolian featured people settled in the Himachal hills are mentioned as Bhutas and Kiratas in the Indian literature. In pre-historic times they occupied the sub-Himalayan region and presently they are

found only in the higher regions of the Himachal Pradesh. Their characteristic features include Tibto-Burman language, Lamaistic Buddhism, mixed economy of live-stock raising, shifting cultivation and trade.¹⁴

The Khasas

A second branch of the Aryans, which established its colonies in the hills and valleys of Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Garhwal, Kumaon and Nepal, came to be known as the Khasas. The Khasas are considered to be Kshatriyas, who preceded the Vedic Aryans in coming to India. They engulfed the whole of the cis-Himalayas from Kashmir to Nepal and turned Kinnaur-Kirat and Nagaland into the Khasa land. They spoke a language closely allied to Sanskrit.

The Khasas, in course of time, however, lost their claim to consideration as Aryans and became *Mlechchhas* or the Barbarians because of their non-observance of the rules for eating and drinking as observed by the Sanskritic people of India. The Khasas were a war-like tribe and were well known to the ancient as well as the classical writers. They organised the aboriginal tribes and were in turn influenced by them in shaping their social structure. They organised themselves into families and villages and elected an individual called Mavi or Mavana meaning a strong-man. They constantly fought among themselves and plundered each other. The stronger Mavana subdued the weaker one and annexed his circle into his own. Thus the whole region was split into small units called the Mavanas which later developed into tribal republics called *Janapadas* in the Sanskrit literature.¹⁵

The Tribal Republics or the Janapadas

The political history of Himachal pradesh during the Vedic period is not as fully known as it is during the period of the *Mahabharata* in one thousand B.C., when we come across an era of tribal republics referred as the *Janapadas* in classical literature. Some of the important tribal republics of Himachal Pradesh were the Audumbaras, the Trigartas, the Kulutas and the Kulinda or Kunindas¹⁶, which continued to flourish in several areas of the Himachal Pradesh after the decline of the power of the Kushanas. The rise of the latter Audumbaras, Yaudheyas and the Kunindas during this period is known on the basis of archaeological, numismatic and literary sources, apart from the travellers accounts.

The *Mahabharata*¹⁷ refers to a number of small tribal republics called *janapadas* and information is also corroborated by the Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*. These *janapadas*, mostly named after the group of peoples or territorial units, retained their own cultural integrity in matters of customs, beliefs and dialects. These were territorial or ethnic units and some were monarchical. The majority, however, was republican in character and these were also called *Sangha Janapadas* or *Ayudhajivi Sanghas* who worked under the elected or hereditary chiefs and their own assemblies.¹⁸

A. The Audumbaras

One of the most prominent tribes of ancient Himachal Pradesh was known as Audumbara, Udambara or Odumbara which finds a detailed reference in the *Mahabharata*¹⁹. The Audumbara coins²⁰ are among some of the earliest coins found in the various parts of the Himachal Pradesh, apart from the Punjab districts of Pathankot and Hoshiarpur.

The Audumbara republic flourished in the Kangra region. Their coins mention the names of the early Kangra rulers Mahadeva, Dharghosh and Rudravarman. Their economic prosperity as well as their building skills are testified from their coins bearing inscriptions of a temple and a god. The early history of Audumbaras is obscure. During Panini's period in about 5th century B.C. they have been referred to in association with the people of Jalandhara.²¹

The Audumbaras maintained their premier position among the other republics of the north western India. Their ruler Dharghosh, was probably the most important ruler of the republic and he is said to have successfully checked the advance of the Indo-Greek king Demetrius-I towards the Upper-Bari-Doab. The boundaries of the Audumbara republic extended at least upto the bank of river Sutlej and their dominance continued even under Dharghosh's successor, Mahadeva²².

The growth of the indigenous regional power of the Audumbaras and their material prosperity is testified from a large number of silver and copper coins which date from the first century B.C. Some of the Audumbara coins are associated with 'Mitrās' which omit the name of the tribe. It is suggested that this was a new dynasty related to the Panchala

rulers of Mathura whose names also end with the suffix 'Mitra'²⁴. The issue of silver coins may indicate that the economic position of the Audumbaras was very sound. That their republic was situated on the commercial routes from the Gangetic plains to Central Asia, may also have contributed largely to their economic affluence²⁵.

The Audumbaras finally fell before the emerging power of the Kushana empire which extended its sway over the area earlier held by the Audumbaras²⁶.

B. The Trigarta

The Trigarta is synonymous with the Jalandhara territory as well as a mountain tribe. Its earliest reference is found in the *Mahabharata* and in the *Puranas*. It is also mentioned in the Panini's work and Hemchandra's *Abhidarra Chintamani*. Probably Jalandhara was the name of the territory in the plains and the Trigarta of that in the hills. The literary sources concerning Trigarta are also supplemented by the numismatic evidence. A type of a coin issued quite early in the Christian era mentions the kingdom of Trigarta (*Trakata-Janapada*).²⁷

In the great epic *Mahabharata*, the founder of the Trigarta is mentioned as Susharman who is further stated to be an ally of the Kauravas and had attacked Virata, the king of the Matsyas. After the Mahabharata war, the family is said to have lost its original home at Multan and retired under Susharman to the Jallandhar region, where they settled down and built the Nagarkot fort.

In the *Mahabharata*, Trigarta is mentioned with the other Ganas and janapadas of the Punjab. There is also no doubt that the Trigarta country refers to modern Kangra and the land between Ravi and Sutlej²⁸. Panini mentions Trigarta as *Ayudhajivi Sangha* and *Trigarta Shashathas*.²⁹

The Trigarta probably represented the second cluster of mountainous *sanghas* in the north west. The economy of these *sanghas*, including Trigarta, was perhaps based on mercenary services offered by a large number of its members to the kings and traders. These services were necessitated by the economic developments under the impact of the iron-age leading to political expansion, trade and large scale urbanisation.³⁰

C. The Kulutas

The Kulutas ruled over the Upper Valley of Beas river in the Kulu area. One of their rulers called Virayasha³¹ is described as the king of the Kulutas. A silver coin of the king discovered from Kulu has been ascribed to the Ist- Second century A.D. ³²

The Kuluta finds mention in the *Ramayana*, *Vishnu Purana* and the *Mahabharata*. A full chapter entitled 'Kulutapitha Mahatmya' is devoted to the Kulutas in the *Brahmanda Purana*. The ancient capital of the Kulutas was Nagar on the banks of the Beas. In Vishakhadatta's play, *Mudrarakshasa*, written in 324 B.C., the Kulutas are mentioned as one of the tribes which found recruitment in the Chandragupta Maurya's army that had gathered to fight against the Nanda ruler of Magadha. When Chandragupta became the ruler of Magadha, he started a series of conquests including in the area then held by the Kulutas.

During the course of Chandragupta's north-western expedition, he was opposed by a confederacy of the five kings including Chitravarma of Kuluta. However, there are only casual references about the Kulutas and very little is known about their history in the republican form. The Kuluta tribe, in fact, seems to have lost its republican character during the early centuries of the Christian era. In all probability, it was parcelled out among the petty Ranas and finally it took the form of a kingdom during the period of emperor Harsha.³³

D. The Kunindas

The Kunindas or Kulindas³⁴ are stated to be the most ancient inhabitants of the Himachal Pradesh. Their rule in many parts of Himachal in the pre-Christian era, is known from their early coins. Their influence extended over the area at the foot of the Shiwalik hills, between the Sutlej and Yamuna river, including Shimla, Sirmur and Kinnaur³⁵.

The Kunindas, along with the Yaudheyas, probably constituted the two great republics which saw their rise in the Himachal Pradesh after the downfall of the Kushanas. Both are stated to be the cause as well as the result of the downfall of the Kushanas³⁶.

The ethnographic distribution and the numismatic finds of the

second and the Ist centuries B.C., of the Kunindas in the Shiwalik hills right from Kangra to Kumaon, which included Himachal Pradesh as well as its adjoining areas, shows that at that time the Kunindas were independent. During the Saka invasions, they even extended their power in the plains between Ambala and Saharanpur³⁷.

Among the Kuninda rulers, one Amoghabhuti Kuninda existed during the first half of the first century B.C. This is known on the basis of the Kuninda coinage³⁸. The Kunindas probably disappeared from the political map of northern India sometime before 350 A.D., for they are not mentioned in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta. There is also no other evidence of the continuation of their rule³⁹. It may thus be safely assumed that the Kuninda state did not survive for a longer period and was probably overpowered by the Yaudheyas⁴⁰.

E. The Yaudheyas

Like Kunindas, the Yaudheyas also established their republic on the ruins of the Kushana empire. The tribal republic of the Yaudheyas is known from their copper coins which have been classified by J. Allan into early and later groups⁴¹. The coins of the first group are in Brahmi legend and have been ascribed to the second century A.D., whereas the coins of the second group are ascribed to the third and fourth centuries A.D., when the Yaudheyas had established themselves firmly. The legend found on the coins reads:

‘Yaudheya ganasya Jayasya’ i.e. (the coins belong to the ever victorious Yaudheya Republic).

The Yaudheyas lived in the plains of the Punjab between Sutlej and Yamuna and their tributaries included some principalities and *Janapadas* in the hills also. The Yaudheya republic flourished upto the middle of the fourth century A.D. when finally it was subjugated by Samudragupta⁴².

The Yaudheya republic came to an end with the expansion of the Gupta empire. The Yaudheyas find mention in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta⁴³ amongst the tribal republics which were defeated and subjugated by the mighty emperor of the imperial Gupta dynasty⁴⁴. With the defeat of the Yaudheyas by Samudragupta in the

fourth century A.D., Punjab and the Himachal hills naturally became a part of the Gupta empire. Thus with the end of the different *Janapadas* and *Sanghas*, a new chapter was opened in the history of Himachal Pradesh as we shall see in the subsequent pages.

B. FROM IMPERIAL GUPTAS TO THE RAJPUT STATES

In the period between the downfall of the Kushanas and the emergence of the imperial Guptas, the country between the Himachal mountains and the Narbada river was divided into various independent States (monarchies as well as republics) which did not owe allegiance to any sovereign power. The numismatic and literary evidence indicate the rise of several monarchies and republics in the Gangetic plains and the Himalayan foothills respectively. The Buddhist texts⁴⁵ refer to sixteen Mahajanapadas⁴⁶ shortly before the advent of Lord Buddha (563-483 B.C.).

Another important event in the history of Himachal Pradesh is the Greek invasion in the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. In 327 B.C., Alexander crossed Afghanistan and by the next year he reached Taxila. The Macedonian forces marched along the foothills of the Himalayas and one of the units of Alexander's forces reached river Beas. There, its advance was resisted by the republican people described by Panini as *Ayudhajivi Sanghas* or the warrior communities. According to traditional accounts, when Alexander was in the Punjab, emperor Chandragupta met him along with Chanakya, also known as Kautilya.⁴⁷

The Imperial Guptas and Himachal Pradesh

According to all accounts, Chandragupta and Chanakya took full advantage of the political situation soon after the departure of Alexander. Both of them started recruiting forces⁴⁸ and further consolidated their position by an alliance with the Himalayan chief Parvataka⁴⁹, who is stated to be the Trigarta chief⁵⁰ whose country spread into the Himachal hills and whose capital was at Jalandhara.

With the active assistance of Chanakya, Chandragupta led a revolution at Patliputra and ascended the throne in 324 B.C. by exterminating the Nanda family. Soon Chandragupta expelled the Macedonian garrison and put an end to the Greek rule in the Punjab. His success was

followed by the invasion of States of northern India including those in the inner hills. In the Himachal hills, however, he was opposed by a confederacy⁵¹ of five kings, among whom, according to *Mudrarakshasa's* account, one was the Kuluta ruler Chitravarman.

During the same period, Kachhagupta, the younger brother of Samudragupta, is stated to have conquered the territories leading to the door of Kashmir⁵², which may mean the areas of Kangra, Chamba and Jammu. Samudragupta's nephew and successor, Ramagupta, however, proved unworthy and was unable to face a ruler described as Saka or Khasa, who ruled over some hilly tract of western India. Ramagupta even promised to give away his wife, Dhruvaswamini to the ruler of the hills⁵³.

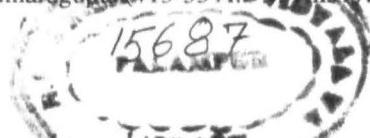
Although different interpretations have been given regarding the exact location and the event referred to above, the suggestion that it occurred in the Kangra region of Himachal Pradesh seems to be more plausible⁵⁴. However, without further evidence, nothing concrete can be said at this stage.

It is suggested that Chandragupta brought under his sway, the whole of ancient Himachal Pradesh. The Mehrauli pillar inscription informs us that the emperor crossed the seven rivers of the Punjab and even conquered the Bahlikas⁵⁵ living in Afghanistan or nearby it. It may have been possible only after establishing a direct control over the Punjab and Himachal hills.

That emperor Chandragupta also received military assistance from some of the hill chiefs is known from the Salari rock inscription of Kulu⁵⁶. The inscription refers to the defeat of one Rajjilabala by Maharaja Shri Chandresvara Hastin. The latter was probably deputed by Samudragupta or one of his successors to make further conquests in the hills. The conquered chief Rajjilabala presumably was a local ruler belonging to Kulu-Mandi region of Himachal Pradesh who may have succeeded in carving out an independent principality for himself after the downfall of the Kushanas⁵⁷.

Kumaragupta

The process of conquests continued in the Himalayan region during the rule of Kumaragupta (415-55 A.D.). This is known both from



archaeological and the literary sources. Rajashekha in his *Kavyamimamsa* praises Kautilya for the new conquests and introduction of efficient administration in the Himalayas then inhabited by the Kinnaras⁵⁸.

The conquests of the parts of Himachal Pradesh by Kumara-gupta is also known from one of the types of his coins which depict the God Kartikeya on his mount peacock. Since we notice the figure of the God on the coins of the Yaudheyas, Audumbaras and the Kunindas, inhabiting this region, the motif may have been borrowed from those of the tribal ones by the Guptas after they took these tribes under subjugation⁵⁹.

Skandagupta

During the rule of Skandagupta, the Hunas⁶⁰ invaded India and threatened the integrity of the Gupta empire. They were, however, repulsed⁶¹. After Skandagupta, the Hunas again invaded India and occupied Punjab and possibly some parts of Himachal Pradesh too since the latter controlled the important trade routes connecting Central Asia, China, Tibet, Ladakh and Kashmir. The Huna invasion⁶² expedited the decline and the downfall of the Guptas. This created a political uncertainty in the hilly region and resulted in the rise of a number of local rulers and growth of small principalities. It was probably during this period that a number of independent principalities emerged and they managed to delink themselves politically from the plains in the northern India⁶³.

Harshavardhana (606-647 A.D.)

The political instability in the Punjab plains and its adjoining hills came to an end with the rise of Prabhakara Vardhan, who carved out a small kingdom for himself on the ruins of the Gupta empire. After defeating and repulsing the Hunas, he chose Thaneshwar (near Kurukshetra) to be his capital. The *Harshacharita* of Banabhatta informs that Prabhakar Vardhan had taken an oath to make conquests in different directions, including Himachal Pradesh. This era of conquests continued under his son Harshavardhana who moved soon to Kanauj, which was destined to become the capital of northern India for many years to come.

Himachal Pradesh, during the rule of Harshavardhana seems to have enjoyed an era of peace and prosperity. The *Rajatarangini* and Hiuen Tsang's account inform that he succeeded in giving good administration to this region⁶⁴. He appointed provincial governors and ruled through them. Samudrasena was probably one of his chiefs appointed in Kulu⁶⁵.

The account left by Hiuen Tsang, who visited this part of India in 629 A.D., shows that Harshavardhana held control over the different parts of Himachal Pradesh. The King of Jalandhara⁶⁶ was instructed by Harsha to extend all kinds of comforts and security to the Chinese traveller during the latter's visit there.

From Jalandhar, the Chinese traveller, went to the Tapasavana, which has been identified with the hills, where there were many Buddhist monks and shrines. Further, he went to Kulu and then to Surghna, Brahmapura, and Kumaon regions. From the account left by Hiuen Tsang, it appears that these places in Himachal Pradesh were fully under the control of emperor Harsha⁶⁷.

The Post-Harsha Period

After the disintegration of the Harsha empire, there was a great political upheaval in the north Indian plains. The Gurjara-Pratiharas emerged as one of the leading powers here. They seem to have left their influence on the various parts of the Himachal region. Several bronze and stone sculptures depicting the Pratihara art-styles have been found here.

The Ranas and Thakurs

After the collapse of the Imperial Vardhana empire, northern India again became a congeries of small states. In the cis-Himalayan region, between Ravi and the Yamuna, a new group of petty chiefs, known as the Ranas and the Thakurs, emerged. They claimed to be Kshatriyas. This period is known as the *Aptakuri* or *Aptakurai* while the territory of a Rana was called *Ranhun* and of a Thakur *Thakuri* or *Thakurai*⁶⁸.

On the slab inscriptions and copper-plate title deeds, the Ranas are indicated by the name of *Rajanka*, the court aristocracy of the pre-

Rajput period. Hutchison and Vogel are of the view that the word *Rana* is derived directly from the Prakrit title *Rajana* (i.e. *rajanna*, Sanskrit *rajanya*) and was used either as the title of a petty chief or as a caste name. In the former meaning it is synonymous with Sanskrit *Samanta* and *Thakkura*⁶⁹. The oldest record actually bearing the title *Rajanka* was found on an image at Svain, in the Himgiri *pargana* of Chamba, which may be assigned to the 9th or 10th century A.D.⁷⁰.

The name *Thakur*⁷¹ means 'Lord'. In ancient period when might was right, all the ancient rulers of the hills gave an impression that they were the Kshatriyas. Men of other communities, who had strong personality and the qualities of leadership, might have conquered a tract of country and assumed or were given the title of *Thakkura*, later *Thakur*. The word *Thakkura* occurs as *Thakura* in the Mirakula image inscription, but is not found elsewhere in the Chamba epigraps.⁷²

The Ranas and Thakurs exercised authority either as independent rulers or under the suzerainty of a paramount power. The territories of the Ranas and Thakurs were of very diminutive size and their boundaries were liable to constant change accordingly as each ruler gained ascendancy or yielded to a superior power.

As a result of the foundation of the Rajput principalities in the Western Himalayas by the Rajput adventurers, the *Aptihakurai* period came to an end sooner in some parts than in others. These Rajput adventurers either came direct from the Indian plains, or were cadets of one or other of the noble families which had already established themselves in the hills.

The Rajput Period

The power of the Gurjara-Pratiharas declined in the later half of the tenth century. Their feudatory chiefs tried to fill in the vacuum and consequently the Rajput States rose to power in Rajputana and Ganga-Yamuna Doab.⁷³ It is probable that some Rajput adventurers penetrated into the Western Himalayan hills, subdued the local petty chiefs, Ranas and Thakurs, and established powerful principalities. These Rajput chiefs invited other Rajputs from the plains to join their forces against the local chiefs. Most of the hill states were founded before the eleventh century when the Turkish invasions of north India had started. The following

were some of the important Rajput states that existed in this period:

Trigarta

Trigarta⁷⁴ was the oldest among the hill states. Prior to the Turkish invasions in the beginning of the eleventh century A.D., Trigarta comprised almost the entire area between the Sutlej and the Ravi in the outer hills, except Kulu and Jalandhar Doab in the plains⁷⁵. However, as a result of the Turkish invasions, the territory on the plains was lost and Nagarkot or Kangra became the capital of the States. The other name of the country was Katoch from which the royal family derives its clan name.

The traditional history of the State goes back to a time, long anterior to the Christian era. According to the tradition, the state was founded by Susarma Chandra, who figures in the *Mahabharata* as an ally of the Kauravas. The famous fort of Kangra was captured by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in 1009 A.D.⁷⁶ and is said to have changed hands several times during the subsequent centuries, till it was finally garrisoned by the Mughal troops in 1620 A.D., during the reign of emperor Jahangir.⁷⁷ Raja Sansar Chand lost the fort of Kangra to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809 A.D., when the latter annexed the state of Kangra to the Kingdom of Lahore⁷⁸.

Jaswan, Guler, Siba and Datarpur

Jaswan It is an offshoot of Kangra, was founded by Purab Chand, a cadet of the Katoch family, in about 1170 A.D. It was subject to the Mughals from the time of Akbar. It was annexed to the Sikh kingdom in 1815 A.D. by Maharaja Ranjit Singh⁷⁹.

Guler It was another off-shoot of Kangra house and was founded in 1405 A.D. by Hari Chand, the Raja of Kangra. The original name of the state was Gwalior of whichn Guler is a derivation. The most notable chief of the Guler line was Raja Rup Chand who took active part in the siege of Kangra fort during the regin of emperor Jahangir in 1620 A.D. Raja Rup Chand remained loyal to emperor Shahjahan also. Their loyalty to the Mughals continued even during the rule of emperor Shahjahan. Maharaja Ranjit Singh annexed this state to Lahore kingdom in 1813 A.D.⁸⁰.

Siba It was an offshoot of Guler. Just as Guler it was an offshoot of

Kangra. It was founded by Sibaran Chand in about 1550 A.D. This State seems to have preserved its independence throughout the Mughal period. The state finds mention in the Jahangir's autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* during the emperor's visit to Kangra in 1622 A.D. The state like others of Kangra group, became a subject to the Sikhs during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. However, it was saved from a total ruin during the Sikh rule due to the intervention of Raja Dhian Singh, the Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who entered into a matrimonial alliance with the State. The Sikhs were finally driven out of the Siba fort during the Second Sikh War⁸¹.

Datarpur It was an offshoot of Siba and was founded by Datar Chand in 1550 A.D.⁸². Not much is known about the State till it came under the control of Maharaja Sansar Chand. In 1809 A.D. , the State became a subject to Maharaja Ranjit Singh by whom it was annexed to the Lahore kingdom in 1818 A.D.

Nurpur It was founded by a Tomar Rajput, Jhet Pal⁸³ of Delhi who settled at Pathankot (originally *pratishthana*) in about 1000 A.D. The capital was shifted from Pathankot to Dhameri in the begining of the seventeenth century. It was renamed Nurpur, after the Mughal emperor, Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir. The State was conquered by the Sikhs in 1809 and annexed to the Lahore kingdom in 1816 A.D.

Chamba It was one of the oldest principalities of the Western Himalayas. Its old capital was at Brahmpura, founded by Maru Varman in about 550 A.D. The Chamba family is said to be orginally from Ayodhya⁸⁴. The Rajas of Chamba belonged to the Suryavanshi (solar) line of the Rajputs. In 920 A.D., Raja Shil Varman is known to have conquered the lower Ravi valley and transferred his capital from Brahmpura to Champa, now called Chamba⁸⁵.

For many centuries the state of Chamba remained a subject to Kashmir. It perhaps regained its independence only in the twelfth century. From the time of Mughal emperor Akbar, till 1752 A.D., it remained under the Mughal ascendancy⁸⁶. For some time it passed under the sway of the Durrani kings of Kabul. It became a tributary to the Sikhs in 1770 A.D., and from 1786 to 1805 it was tributary to Maharaja Sansar Chand of Kangra. In 1809 A.D. it became a subject to the Sikh kingdom⁸⁷.

Kulu It was another old principality in the western Himalayas and was known as Kuluta⁸⁸ in the ancient period. As already said, it was once a tribal republic or *Janapada*. According to the traditional accounts, the state was founded by Behangmani Pal not later than the first or second century A.D.⁸⁹. The ruling family, the tradition holds, came from Mayapuri, Haridwar, in Uttar Pradesh⁹⁰. Its earliest capital was at Nast or Jagat Sukh. During the rule of Raja Jagat Singh (A.D. 1637-1672), Sultanpur became the seat of the government of the Kulu rulers.

During the rule of Raja Man Singh (1688-1719 A.D.), Kulu reached the zenith of its glory. He brought the local chiefs of Lahul under his sway. The Sikh army under the Sandhwalia Sardars invaded Kulu in 1840 A.D.⁹¹ and brought it under the Sikh control.

Suket-Mandi The chiefs of Suket, Mandi, Keonthal and Kashtwar claimed descent from a common ancestor of the Sena dynasty of Bengal⁹². During the attack of Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji over Bengal, Lakshman Sen (1178-1205 A.D) fled from Nadia to eastern Bengal. One of his successors Rup Sen, reached eastern Punjab and settled at Ropar. Due to the Turkish pressure, his three sons fled to the hills for refuge. The three brothers namely Vira or Bir Sen, Giri Sen and Hamir Sen were the founders of the states of Suket, Keonthal and Kashtwar (in Jammu) respectively. Suket was founded in 1211 A.D. by Vir Sen, with its capital at Pangana.

Mandi It was an offshoot of Suket. During the first quarter of the fourteenth century, Sahu Sen (the eighth ruler of this house), after a dispute with his younger brother Bahu Sen, made the latter leave Suket to reside at Manglor in Kulu. Raja Ajbar Sen, who was nineteenth in descent from Bahu Sen, built the new town of Mandi on the left bank of river Beas in 1527 A.D. The two states of Mandi and Suket were frequently at war with each other. Maharaja Ranjit Singh made it a tributary to the Sikh Kingdom in 1809 A.D. The Maharaja, however, did not try to annex it.

During the reign of Raja Balbir Sen, the Sikh forces, under General Ventura, invaded Mandi. The Raja was treacherously imprisoned and forced to surrender all the important forts of the state. Later, he was sent to Amritsar as prisoner and confined in the fort of Gobindgarh. He was, however, set free in May 1841 by Maharaja Sher Singh.⁹³ As a

result of the treaty of March, 1846, after the First Sikh War, the hill territory between the Sutlej and river Indus, was ceded to the British Government and thus Mandi also became a part of the British India.

Bilaspur According to the traditional accounts, Bilaspur (earlier known as Kahlur)⁹⁴ was founded by Bir Chand in about 900 A.D. He was a descendant from the ancient Rajas of Chanderi in Bundelkhand⁹⁵. Kahlur became a tributary to the Mughals during the reign of Raja Gian Chand (1570 A.D.)⁹⁶. Raja Dip Chand founded the town of Bilaspur in about 1654 A.D. Originally it was called Beaspur, as it was situated on the left bank of river Sutlej which was called Beas Gufa.

Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra invaded Bilaspur in 1795 and annexed most of the territory on the right bank of river Sutlej. In his great dispair Raja Mahan Chand of Bilaspur sought the intervention of the Gurkhas who defeated Raja Sansar Chand finally in 1805 and occupied the fort of Kangra. But they were compelled to retire across the Sutlej by the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809. The Gurkhas continued to occupy Bilaspur and the States of Simla Hills till 1814 A.D. The First Nepalese War began in 1814, in consequence of their invasion of the British territory. The Gurkhas were defeated and the British Government granted a *Sanad*, dated March 6, 1815 A.D. to Bilapsur confirming Raja Mahan Chand in the possession of the territory on the left bank of Sutlej. The territory on the right bank of the river, restored to the Gurkhas, was held on condition of allegiance and tribute to the Sikhs.

Nalagarh (Hindur)

The principality of Hindur (Nalagarh) was an offshoot of Kahlur. Kahan Chand, the eleventh Raja of Bilaspur, had three sons. One of them Ajai Chand resolved to carve out a principality for himself. Having raised a force within his father's kingdom, he invaded the territory of Handu the Brahman Thakur of Hindur. Handu's cruel and unjust rule had alienated him from his subjects and consequently, they welcomed Ajai Chand as a deliverer. Handu was defeated and Ajai Chand established the state of Hindur, also known as Nalagarh, in about 1100 A.D.⁹⁷.

Kutlehr Kutlehr state was founded by a Brahmin named Jas Pal, in about tenth or eleventh century A.D. On acquisition of regal power, he received

recognition as a Rajput. The state lies on the border of Kangra and Hoshiarpur. According to G.C. Barnes its founder came from Sambhal, near Moradabad, but the family records trace his descent from certain Raja of Poona in Maharashtra. The two ruling houses of Koti and the Bhajji were founded by the junior members of this very family in the Bara Thakurai areas, presently known as the Simla Hills⁹⁸. The state became tributary to the Sikhs in 1809 A.D.

Bhangal The state of Bangahal consisted of Bara Bhangal and Chota Bhangal, divided by the high mountain range of the Dhauladhar. It is said to have been founded by a Brahmin around 1200 A.D., who ranked as a Rajput on becoming a king. When Delel Pal became the Raja in 1749 A.D., most of its territory was encroached by Kulu and Mandi. Towards the end of the 18th century, these states paid five lakhs of rupees to Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra to secure themselves in its possession⁹⁹.

The Bara Thakurais and The Athara Thakurais

The territory between the rivers Sutlej and Yamuna was divided into a number of small and big states which were governed by chiefs more or less independent in proportion as per their means and power. These states were classed under the Simla Hill States. Among these, the states of Bushahr and Sirmur were the most important ones and they occupied the largest portion of the area. The remaining territory was divided into a number of petty chieftains, all of which were recognised under the appellation of *Bara Thakurais* (twelve Lordships) and *Athara Thakurais* (eighteen Lordships). The *Bara Thakurais* were:

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Keonthal | 2. Bhagat | 3. Kunihar | 4. Kuthar |
| 5. Bhajji | 6. Dhami | 7. Mahlog | 8. Koti |
| 9. Mangal | 10. Beja | 11. Bharoli | 12. Bhagal |

The *Athara Thakurais* were located in the valleys of rivers Sutlej, Giri and Pabar. These were:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Jubbal | 2. Sari | 3. Rawingarh | 4. Balson |
| 5. Ratesh | 6. Ghund | 7. Madhan | 8. Theog |
| 9. Kumarasain | 10. Dhaneti | 11. Delath | 12. Karangla |
| 13. Kotkhai - Kotgarh | | 14. Darkoti | 15. Tharoch |
| 16. Dhadi | 17. Sangri | 18. Bharauli | |

The *Bara Thakurais* and the *Athara Thakurais* were founded either by the Rajput adventurers from the plains or by the cadets of the ruling families of other hill states. The *Bara Thakurais* were tributaries to Kahlur, Hindur and Sirmur according to the degree of power these states possessed.

Keonthal Among the Bara Thakurais, Keonthal¹⁰⁰ was the largest. The traditional accounts refer to its foundation around 1211 A.D. by one Giri Sen, the younger brother of Bir Sen, the founder of the Suket State. Keonthal paid to the paramount authority in the hills a sum of Rupees 1100 annually, which was levied in the name of the ruling Delhi Kings through the Rajas of Kahlur, Sirmur and Hindur¹⁰¹. In 1800 A.D., on the eve of the Gurkha invasion, Keonthal is said to have been enjoying suzerainty over the eighteen minor *thakurais* but after the expulsion of the Gurkhas it remained the overlord of only five *thakurais*, viz: Koti, Theog, Ghund, Madhan and Ratesh¹⁰².

Bhagat The state of Bhagat is said to have been founded by a Panwar adventurer, Ajai Dev, who came from Central India. The Panwar Rajputs claim their descent from Raja Bhoj or Raja Vikramaditya of Ujjain. The state of Bhagat also remained as a tributary to the kings of Delhi and paid an annual tribute of Rs. 1000/- only through the Rajas of Hindur, Kahlur or Sirmur, apart from furnishing a fixed number of troopers as well as porters. During the period of Rana Sabha Chand (1640-1670 A.D.) the capital was shifted to the new town of Arki in 1643 A.D.¹⁰³

During the Gurkha occupation of the entire region between Yamuna and Sutlej (1805-1815 A.D.), its Raja, Mohinder Singh, remained undisturbed as he was an ally of the Bilaspur ruler on whose invitation the Gurkhas had invaded the Himachal hills. After the Gurkhas were driven out by the British, five *paraganas*¹⁰⁴ of Bhagat were taken and sold to the State of Patiala for Rs. 1,80,000 and the remaining territory was restored to the Rana.

It is also stated that during the Gurkha invasion, the Arki ruler took shelter with the Nalagarh rulers. The Gurkha commander, Amar Singh Thapa, established himself at Arki and commanded the invasion in the Himachal hills, which ended in 1815 with the British annexation¹⁰⁵.

Kunihar The founder of the state of Kunihar is said to be Abhoj Dev who

originally hailed from Akhnur, near Jammu. The area was conquered by him around 1154 A.D. Around 1600 A.D., the neighbouring states of Baghat, Kenothal etc., encroached upon this *thakurai* and wrested some of its territory. There was a joint attack by Nalagarh and Bhagat on Kunihar and the state was reduced to almost an area of about 12 Sq Kms. only as a result of the assault. The rulers of Kunihar are entitled as *rais*¹⁰⁶.

Kuthar This State comprised an area of about twenty Sq miles and was selected as the capital by a Rajkumar of Kashtwar during the period of the Turkish invasions. The state remained tributary to Nalagarh and Bilaspur respectively. However, during the period of the Gurkha invasion, it was tributary to Keonthal. During the Gurkha attack, its Rana, Bhopal Chand fled to Manimajara and his successors settled there.¹⁰⁷

Bhajji The early history of Bhajji is not fully known. The founders of Bhajji and Koti states are said to have come from Kutlehr in Kangra. It is further stated that the 24th Raja of Kutlehr, Ram Pal had five sons. After the succession of the eldest the other led by Charu (one of the remaining four brothers) crossed the river Sutlej and established themselves at Mul Bhajji in the vally of Nauti stream below Mahasu. Charu became the founder of Bhajji whereas another of his brother Chand founded Koti and made it his capital. At a later date one of its rulers, Sohanpal shifted his capital to Suni, on the banks of river Sutlej.¹⁰⁸

Dhami It is stated that Dhami was founded by one of the Chauhan descendants of Prithviraj Chauhan, who was driven away from the neighbourhood of Delhi to Raipur (Ambala district) as a consequence of the invasion of Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori at the close of the twelfth century. Subsequently, the Chauhan adventurer shifted to Dhami. The state consisted of an area of about twenty eight Sq miles and had its capital at Dialog. The state of Dhami remained more or less a feudatory of Bilaspur till 1915, after which it became an independent *thakurai*. Rana Goverdhan Singh of Dhami remained loyal to the British during the Anglo-Gurkha War and as such, the state remained exempt from payment of any *nazarana*¹⁰⁹.

The state of Dhami continued to enjoy an independent status during the rule of its chief known as Fateh Singh. As a result of the autocratic rule of the Dhami chief, the state witnessed one of the worst agitations in the form of 'Dhami Firing'.¹¹⁰

Mahlog The state constituted an area of about 43 Sq. miles. It is stated that its founder Hari Chand had migrated from Ayodhya. The date of his conquest of Mehlog, however, is not known. The area is stated to have been earlier inhabited chiefly by Mavis. The state remained subject to the Mughals and paid *nazrana* through Kahlur¹¹¹.

Koti The state of Koti was spread over an area of about 44 Sq. miles. Its founder was a Brahmin of Kaundilya sub-caste. As already stated the founders of Bhajji and Koti States came from Kutlehr in Kangra.¹¹² The chief of Koti remained loyal to the British during the great revolt of 1857 and was conferred the title of Rana. At one time Koti included the nearby Simla areas of Sanjauli, Mashobra, Naldehra, Bharari, Kufri and Kusumti etc. After merging some of these areas in Simla district, the British granted the territory of Sabathu to the *thakur* of Koti¹¹³.

Mangal The state is situated on the bank of the river Sutlej near Bilaspur. Its Rao claims himself to be a descendant of the Marwar chiefs. The state which is spread over an area of about 12 Sq. miles, remained a tributary to the Rajas of Kahlur. It is also believed that, its founder, whose ancestors were Atri Rajputs of Marwar, was a *subedar* in the Kahlur State. The territory of Mangal was granted to him in recognition of his services to the Raja of Kahlur. After the expulsion of the Gurkhas, the state became independent¹¹⁴.

Beja Beja was also among one of the small states and covered an area of only four Sq. miles. Its chief, Garab Chand, claimed descent from the Tomar Rajputs of Delhi. His ancestors are said to have migrated from Delhi to Haridwar and then to Beja. The state remained tributary to Kahlur and the Gurkhas and finally in 1790 it became independent in consequence of the partial conquest of Kahlur by Hindur¹¹⁵.

Bharoli The *thakurai* of Bharoli consisted of the *parganas* of Sabathu, Siyah and Gharoli. Not much is known about the rulers of this *thakurai*. After the expulsion of the Gurkhas by the British in 1815, several parties claimed the *thakurai* of Bharoli, including the Ranas of Keonthal and Bhagat. The British, however, retained it and stationed their troops at Sabathu¹¹⁶.

The Athara Thakurais

Jubbal Among the *Athara Thakurais*, the *thakurai* of Jubbal in the Upper

Simla Hills was of considerable importance. The traditional accounts refer that till twelfth century A.D. the ancestors of the chiefs of Jubbal were the rulers of Sirmur and belonged to the Rathor clan of the Chandrabansi sect of the Rajputs¹¹⁷. Their transfer from Sirmur to Jubbal during the close of the twelfth century, took place during the rule of Raja Ugar Chand.

Of the three sons of Ugar Chand, the eldest Karan Chand founded Jubbal; the second, Mool Chand founded Sari and Duni Chand, the state of Rawingarh. The original capital of Jubbal was at Soonpur in Hat Koti¹¹⁸.

Although the state of Jubbal was considered very resourceful among the other hill states of Upper Simla Hills, it had to remain a tributary of the Garhwal or Sirmur for a long period¹¹⁹. Soon after the expulsion of the Gurkhas, its ruler Puran Chand was recognised as the Rana of Jubbal. In 1890 the entire property of the Hat koti temple was declared as belonging to the three states of Jubbal, Bushahr and Rawingarh¹²⁰.

Rawingarh The state was confined to an area of about sixteen Sq. miles. However, prior to its becoming a tributary of the Jubbal, it included a vast area under its jurisdiction, including the area lying on the banks of rivers Pabar and Tons. The British treated it as a tributary of Jubbal. In 1815 some part of this state was handed over to the Garhwal and came to be known as Garhwal-Rawin. The British retained Sharachli, Batar and Kathasu which were subsequently transferred to Keonthal in 1830 in exchange for a portion of the present town of Shimla¹²¹.

Balson It was an offshoot of Sirmur and was founded by Alak Singh. Prior to the Gurkha invasion, it was tributary to the Sirmur State.

Ratesh It consisted of an area of only 3 sq. miles. It is said that at one time it covered a vast area extending to both the banks of river Giri. The founder of the state is said to be Rai Singh, the brother of Sirmur chief Raja Karam Parkash.¹²²

Ghund It was also a small *thakurai* covering an area of about thirteen Sq. miles. The traditional accounts refer to its foundation by one Galnolu Modi. Some part of the state was wrested by the Bilaspur rulers¹²³.

Theog It covered an area of about 33 sq.miles and was under the control of the Chandel Rajputs who settled here after migrating from Bilaspur. After several generations, three brothers migrated to Simla Hills and founded the states of Theog, Madhan and Ghund. Among them the eldest was Jaichand who founded Theog.

Kumarsain, Khaneti, Delath, Karangla and Kotkhai-Kotgarh

According to the traditional accounts these states have a common origin. Their foundation is said to have taken place some time in the eleventh century during the Ghaznavide invasions by one Kirat Chand along with his brothers¹²⁴.

Delath was founded by one Priti Singh, a brother of Kirat Chand, the founder of Kumarsain. Darkoti's founder was Durga Singh, who is said to have belonged to the Jaipur royal family. Tharoch was founded by one of the princes of Udaipur house named Deokaran. Formerly Tharoch was a part of the Sirmur State. Dhadi was an off-shoot of Tharoch State, whereas Sangri originally belonged to Bushahr and was taken by Raja Man Singh of Kulu during the early eighteenth century. Later Sangri came to be included as one of the *thakurais* in the list of *Athara Thakurais*. Another state Bharoli, situated between Kotkhai and Balson was subject to Kumarsain. After changing hands between the Gurkhas, and Nalagarh chiefs, the *thakurai* was finally transferred to Balson¹²⁵.

On the commencement of the First Nepalese War in 1814 A.D., most of these *thakurais* sided with the British Government and were successful in expelling the Gurkhas from their territories. The war ended in 1815 after which most of the chiefs were confirmed in possession of their territories. The British Government granted them *sanads* defining their rights and obligations¹²⁶.

Bushahr-Kinnaur

According to tradition, the state of Bushahr-Kinnaur was established by one Pradhuman, who established his capital at Kamru¹²⁷. In the early tenth century, the capital was transferred to Sarahan. The most prominent ruler in the history of Bushahr was Raja Kehri Singh (1639-1696 A.D.) upon whom emperor Aurangzeb conferred the title of *Chhatrapati*. On the conclusion of the First Nepalese War in 1815 A.D.,

this State came under the British control. The chiefs of Bushahr were also rewarded with parts of upper Kinnaur, which were seized from Ladakh during the war. The state of Bushahr also secured the right of free trade and movement in Tibet through a commercial treaty. During the rule of Raja Ram Singh, the capital of the state was shifted to Rampur¹²⁸.

Sirmur The early history of the Sirmur State is a little hazy. The traditional accounts refer to its foundation by the rulers of the Rathor clan of the Rajputs. During the rule of Udit Parkash in the early thirteenth century, the capital was shifted to Kalsi. During the middle of the thirteenth century, its ruler Sumer Parkash conquered Ratesh. Subsequently, many small principalities like Jubbal, Balson, Kumarsain, Kotkhai, Ghund and Theog were over-run and made feudatory states by the successor of Sumer Parkash. At one time the dominions of the state of Sirmur extended upto Sutlej. To have an effective control over the northern parts, the capital was once again shifted to Hat Koti and finally to Nahan in 1621 A.D.¹²⁹.

The Sirmur rulers remained loyal to the Mughal emperors Shahjahan and Aurangzeb and were rewarded for their services. In the middle of the eighteenth century, its Raja Kirat Parkash, defeated the raja of Garhwal, seized Naraingarh, Morni and Pinjor from the Sikhs and entered into a treaty with Raja Amar Singh of Patiala. The rulers of Sirmur also assisted the Garhwal ruler in his fight against the Gurkhas. After the expulsion of the Gurkhas in 1815, the state of Sirmur came under the British control.

Lahul and Spiti During the medieval period Lahul and Spiti¹³⁰ existed as two separate states in the higher Himalayan zone. Lahul included the valleys of Chandra and Bhaga rivers to the confluence and the main valley of the Chandrabhaga river. It appears that a faint connection between Lahul and Ladakh might have existed in the remote past. At the same time, it might have been more or less under Chamba and Kulu.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, Lahul was ruled by petty chieftains, called *jo*, who were of Tibetan origin and corresponded to the *ranas* and *thakurs* elsewhere in the Himachal Pradesh. Whenever, these *jos* were subjected by the rulers of Ladakh, Chamba or Kulu and they paid annual tributes to the state concerned. This was only a symbol of their submission.

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century, Raja Bidhi Singh of Kulu brought the entire territory of upper Lahul under his sway, which led to an end of the supremacy of Ladakh over Lahul. The boundary between Kulu and Ladakh was fixed at Lingti plains during the rule of Raja Man Singh of Kulu in the early eighteenth century. When Kulu was annexed to the Sikh kingdom of Lahore in 1840-41 A.D., Lahul eventually came under Sikh control.

Spiti is separated from Lahul by a high mountain range. During the ancient and medieval period, Spiti functioned as a separate political and cultural unit. At a very early period it was probably ruled by a Hindu dynasty bearing the suffix of Sena¹³¹. According to Kulu annals, the chief of Spiti, Rajendra Sen made Kulu his tributary during the reign of Raja Rudar Pal. However, Raja Prasidh Pal of Kulu was able to defeat the Spiti ruler in a battle near Rohtang Pass after which Spiti was invaded by the Tibetans. This led to an end of pro-Buddhist Hindu dynasty in Spiti.

It appears that Spiti always remained under the suzerainty of the Tibetans and the Guge kingdoms. Raja Man Singh of Kulu invaded Spiti sometimes after 1680 A.D. and made it tributary to Kulu. The Sikh armies invaded and plundered Spiti in about 1841 A.D. However, it was not annexed to the Lahore kingdom.

The complex topographic features of Himachal Pradesh rendered it impossible for any ruler from within or an outsider, to establish a major and consistent empire over the whole region. Therefore, only small states could flourish here¹³². These states always had strifes amongst themselves which weakened them to a considerable extent and paved way for the imposition of direct political control by Maharaja Ranjit Singh from 1809 A.D. onwards,¹³³ with the exception of the Simla Hill States. It was only after the defeat of the Sikhs in the Anglo-Sikh War of 1845 that most of these states came under the British control¹³⁴.

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- (2) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, (Delhi, 1982), p.31.
- (3) B.B. Lal, 'Palaeoliths from the Beas and Banganga Valley, Punjab', *Ancient India*, Vol. XII, pp. 58-92.
- (4) R.V. Joshi, 'Stone Age Environment and Cultural Sequence in the Kangra Valley, Himachal Pradesh' in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Prehistory of Himachal Pradesh : Some Latest Findings* (Simla, 1979), pp. 1-42.
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- (7) For further details about the pre-history of Himachal Pradesh see Laxman S.Thakur, *The Nagara Temple Architecture of Himachal Pradesh : A Study of Bashesar Mahadeva and Vaidyanath Temples*, A Project Report, Chapter-I, pp. 1-23, Shimla, October, 1986 (unpublished). For neolithic culture of the Kangra Valley (Ror), see also Mohammad Naseem, *The Neolithic Cultures of the Northern Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 130-34.
- (8) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.33.
- (9) L.P. Pandey, *op.cit.*, p.38.
- (10) Mian Goverdhan Singh, (contributed) 'Prehistory and Protohistory' in *Himachal: Past, Present and Future*, (Simla, 1975), p.26.
- (11) J.C. Sharma concludes in his article entitled 'Evidence of human existence from the Siwaliks' as under: 'Siwaliks have contributed a great deal to the emergence and evolution of hominoid ancestry and from hominoids, to *homo erectus* and finally to present day man and his stone age cultures.' V.C. Ohri, (ed.) *Prehistory of Himachal Pradesh: Some latest Findings*, p.51.

- (13) Mian Goverdhan Singh, (contributed), *Himachal: Past, Present and Future*, pp. 27-28. The *Vedas* make frequent mention of the Himalayas. In the later ages, some Vedic saints and sages settled in the lower Himachal valleys had established their hermitages in several places such as Renuka in Sirmur district, Mani Karan in Kulu District, Nirmand and Beas cave in Bilaspur. In the post-Vedic period, the five Pandava brothers are said to have spent most of their exile in these hills and some of the places like Hat Koti in Jubbal and Hidamba goddess in Kulu are connected with them. *op.cit.* p.28.
- (14) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.22.
- (15) J.C. Sharma, 'Evidences of Human Evolution from the Siwaliks', in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *op.cit.*, pp.43-53.
- (16) *Ibid.*, For further details see Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op. cit.*, Chapter V entitled The *Janapadas*. See also L.P. Pandey, 'Early History of Himachal Pradesh' in *Proceedings of the Punjab History Conference*, (Patiala, 1978), pp. 36-51 and *Ibid*, *Ancient Himachal : History Religion and Culture* (Delhi, 1981), Chapter-III. T.R. Sharma, 'Ancient Tribes of Himachal Pradesh' in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Himachal Art and Archaeology: Some Aspects*, pp. 59-65.
- (17) *Mahabharata*, V, 166-9, 'Ashvamedhika Parva', 74-9; 'Drona Parva', 121.13-14; 'Sabha Parva', 52.3, 27, 160; 'Vana Parva', 177-11 cited in L.P. Pandey, *Ancient Himachal: History, Religion and Culture* (henceforth cited as A.H.R.C.) Delhi, 1981.
- (18) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, (henceforth cited as *H.H.P.*). For details concerning the polity and policy of the tribal republics see 'Shanti Parva' in the *Mahabharata*.
- (19) Audumbara is the name of the descendants of sage Vishvamitra, the founder of the *gotra* of Kaushika group, who was probably their national hero. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *H.H.P.*, p.38.
- (20) J. Allan, *A Catalogue of the Indian Coins in the British Museum* (London, 1967), Int.
- (21) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *H.H.P.*, p.38. It has been suggested that the Audumbaras had to bear the brunt of the Aryan aggression which resulted in a division among the tribe. The *Mahabharata* refers to the Punjab Audumbaras while *Markandeya Purana* and the *Brihatasamihita* refer to the southern Audumbaras. The *Vishnu Purana* associates them with the Trigartas of Kangra and Kunindas. *Ibid.* The Audumbaras are also referred to as a section of the Shalvas in Chandragomini's *Vritti*, a Buddhist work written in the 5th century B.C. *Ibid.*
- (22) *Ibid.*, p.39
- (23) *Ibid.*
- (24) L.P. Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh, First to Seventh Century A.D.' p.22.

- (25) L.P. Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh, First to Seventh Century A.D.' p.22.
- (26) Baldev Kumar, *The Early Kushanas* (New Delhi, 1973), p.42.
- (27) J. Allan, *op.cit.*, Int. The coin is in Brahmi script and square in shape. This is only numismatic evidence of the Trigarta as an independent republic.
- (28) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.41.
- (29) That is a confederation of six states. The six members of the confederacy were Kamdoporatha, Dandaki, Kaushthaki, Jalmani, Brahmagupta and Janaki. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 41.
- (30) *Ibid.*, p.42.
- (31) the legend 'Virayashya rajana Kulutasya' is in Sanskrit indicating its late origin but the inscription of 'Rana' in Kharoshthi on the reverse of the coin shows that it can not be of a very late period. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.43.
- (32) J. Allan, *op.cit.*, Int. It is also believed to be of later part of the second century when the power of the Kushanas had started to decline. L.P. Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh....' p. 22.
- (33) Main Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., p.43.
- (34) For reference to Kunindas see J Allan, op. cit., Inter. pl.XXIII; *Mahabharata*, *Vishnu Purana* and Varhamihira's *Brihatasamhita*, Chpt.XIV,p. 31, cited in L.P.Pandey, 'Early History of Himachal Pradesh' in *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*,(Patiala 1978),p.42.
- (35) They are believed to be the predecessors of the modern Kanetha people and the Kinnauris of Himachal Predesh as the name itself suggests. *Ibid.*,p.41.
- (36) *Ibid.*
- (37) Main Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., pp. 44-45.
- (38) Main Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., pp.45-46. The Kuninda coins which are in silver, fall into early and later groups, one about the end of the first century B.C. and the other about three centuries later. These are large pieces resembling the Kushana copper coins. The obverse bears a figure of Shiva holding a trident and the legend '*Bhagvata Chatresvara Mahatman*' which indicates their dedication to Lord Shiva. For Kuninda coins see also J.Allan, *op.cit.*, Int. pp. 159-68 and D.C. Sircar, *Studies in Indian Coins* (Delhi, 1968), p.213.
- (39) Main Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., p.45
- (40) L.P.Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh...',p.23.
- (41) J.Allan, op. cit., Int. The first group is closely connected with the style and type

- of the Kushana coinage.
- (42) D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Book, III, No. 2, p.268;
- (43) D.C.Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Book III, No.2, pp. 268-69.
- (44) L.P.Pandey, 'Early History of Himachal Pradesh.'in *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, (Patiala, 1978), p.44.
- (45) Hiuen Tsang was in India between 630 to 644 A.D.He writes that Buddha, along with his followers,went to Srughna and Kuluta countries. The first place is indentified on the left side of Yamuna and the second is Kulu in the upper Beas valley in Himachal Pradesh.
- (46) The sixteen republics were : Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Koshala, Vriji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asvaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja, each named after the people who settled there or colonised it.
- (47) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 49-50.
- (48) The *Mudrarakshasa* informs about the Himalayan alliance with Parvataks which gave Chandragupta an army of recruits from a variety of people such as Yavanas, Kiratas, Kambojas, Parasikas, Khasas and Vahlukas etc. Of these, the Kiratas and Khasas were from the hills of Himachal Pradesh.
- (49) This is also supported by the Buddhist, Jain and the Sanskrit texts.
- (50) This is also corroborated by Panini's account who describes the people of Trigarta as: *Ayudhajivi*, i.e. 'who live by fighting' (V.3.117).
- (51) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.51.
- (52) *Arya Manjushri Mula Kalpa*, verses 700-707 cited in L.P. Pandey 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh...', p. 23, fn. 7. See also *Ibid.*, 'Gupta Vansh mein Samrat Kachhagupta Ka Sthan' in *Gorakhpur University Patrika*, 1970-71, pp. 15-24.
- (53) Rajashekhar, *Kavyamimamsa*, cited in U.N. Roy, *Gupta Samrat Aur unka Kala*, (Allahabad, 1971), p. 149. According to Vishakhadatta and Banabhatta, Ramagupta later on saved the royal queen as well as the prestige of his empire. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-78.
- (54) It is because in this region Alipur (the camping place of the Khasa people) is situated and the ruins of a fort can still be seen there. *Indian Antiquary*, 1923, p. 183; Cf. U.N. Roy, *op.cit.*, p.165.
- (55) D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Book III, No. 14, pp. 283-84.
- (56) H.N. Sastri, *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1907-08, p. 265.
- (57) L.P.Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh....' pp. 24-25.
- (58) Rajashekhar, *Kavyamimamsa* cited in L.P. Pandey, 'An Outline of History of Himachal Pradesh in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Himachal Art and Archaeology, Some Aspects* (Simla, 1980), p.28, fn. 22.

- (59) J. Allan, *A Catalogue of the Coins in the British Museum*, Vol. II. It is suggested that the coin types and art motifs of the conquered region were adopted by the Guptas for administrative expediency.
- (60) D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Book III, No. 28, pp. 321-25.
- (61) See Junagarh rock inscription of Skandagupta, *Ibid.*
- (62) In all probability, the Hunas conquered some parts of Himachal Pradesh. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, (Calcutta, 1965), Book III, No. 57, pp. 424-25. However, in the absence of any numismatic or epigraphic evidence, it is difficult to comment on any thing with certainty.
- (63) J. Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op.cit.*, vol. I, pp. 77, ff; L.P. Pandey, 'An Outline of the History of Himachal Pradesh....', pp. 25-26. See also N.C. Joshi, 'Early History of Himachal Pradesh' in V.C. Ohri (ed.) *Himachal Art and Archaeology: Some Aspects*, (Simla, 1980), pp. 1-7.
- (64) Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, pp. 435-36; Samuel Beal, *Travels of Huen Tsang* (Calcutta, 1955), pp. 210-11.
- (65) In the Nirmand inscription, he has been described as *Mahasamanta*, a title being used by some feudatories under a sovereign authority. Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, pp. 286-91.
- (66) *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1907-08, p. 261.
- (67) L.P. Pandey, 'Early History of Himachal Pradesh', *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, (Patiala, 1978), p. 50.
- (68) J. Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op.cit.*, vol. I, p.12.
- (69) *Ibid.*, p.13.
- (70) *Ibid.*, p.15.
- (71) The title was used in medieval records from the eighth to the thirteenth century. The *thakurs* and *rauts* thus did not possess a princely status and were possibly entitled as such only when they had fallen down from some royal status. Epigraphic evidence suggests that some Brahmana and Kshatriya families who were related to the royal families and could not succeed to the throne due to some reasons and were thus placed in a subordinate position, were entitled to such a status. V. Upadhyay, *Socio-Religious Condition of North India*, (Varanasi, 1964), pp. 52-53. See also M.S. Ahluwalia, *Muslim Expansion in Rajasthan*, (Delhi, 1978), pp. 34-36.
- (72) Karma Devi, *Bhakti Movement in Himachal Pradesh*, M.Phil (History) Dissertation, H.P. University, 1983 (unpublished), p.14.
- (73) For a detailed study of the rise of various Rajput dynasties in the Rajasthan, see M.S. Ahluwalia, *Muslim Expansion in Rajasthan* (Delhi, 1978), pp. 14-31. See

- also Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Chapter II entitled : *Ranas and Thakurs of the Western Himalaya*.
- (74) For further details about Trigarta/Kangra see also Chapters III and IV.
 - (75) A. Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India*, vol. I, (London, 1871), p.37
 - (76) For details about Kangra State see also Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, pp. 99-198.
 - (77) See *infra*, pp. 112-116
 - (78) See *infra*, pp. 158-61; For a brief review of the history and culture of Kangra see also Gautam Vyathit, *Kangra : History, Culture and Development* (Hindi), Delhi, 1983, Chapter.I.
 - (79) For details concerning the Jaswan State see, Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 207-210.
 - (80) *Ibid.*, pp. 190-207
 - (81) *Ibid.*, pp. 210-11
 - (82) *Ibid.*, p. 212; Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.68-69. See also B.L. Kapur, *Himachal : Itihas Aur Prampara*, (Delhi, 1976), pp. 62-63, for a brief account of Guler and Bhangal.
 - (83) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 52. For a detailed study of Nurpur State see *Ibid.*, pp. 213-267. The famous rulers of the state were, Raja Basu, Raja Suraj Mal and Rajrup, the contemporaries of Mughal emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan respectively. For further details see *Infra*, pp. 121-23.
 - (84) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 268-69.
 - (85) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p.53.
 - (86) See *Infra*, Chapter on *Chamba and the Mughals*.
 - (87) See *Infra*, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Kangra Hills*. For the early history of Chamba see also Gharib Khan, *Mukhtasar Tawarikh Riyasat Chamba*, Urdu, (Chamba, 1933), pp. 18-29.
 - (88) For the *Kulutas* see *Infra*, pp. 48-49; For more details about the early political and cultural history of Kulu, see Pushpa Bindra, *A Study of Kulu Region : From Earliest Times to the 8th Century*, H.P. University, Ph.D. (History) Thesis, 1977 (unpublished), Chapter- II, pp. 28-68.
 - (89) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p.474.
 - (90) *Ibid.*, p. 475.
 - (91) Charles, Elliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism : A Historical Sketch*, Vol. III (London, 1962), pp. 348-358.
 - (92) Mira Seth, *Wall Paintings of the Western Himalayas*, (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 19-21.

- (93) For details see also Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, pp. 373-412; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 104-115.
- (94) Kahlur was named after Gujjar Kahlu during the reign of Raja Veer Chand. Subsequently Raja Dip Chand (ascended 1710 V.S.) shifted his capital to Bilaspur. Akshar Singh, *Bilaspur ki kahani* (Bilaspur, 1941), p.5.
- (95) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 496; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 115-122; Anand Chand, *Bilaspur: Past Present and Future*, Delhi, 1954.
- (96) For an account of Kahlur during the reign of Akbar see A.R. Khan, *Chieftains in the Mughal empire during the reign of Akbar* (Simla, 1977), pp. 49-50.
- (97) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 73-74; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 163-64.
- (98) For different version connected with the foundation of the State of Kutlehr see Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 72-73.
- (99) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 493; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 63-64. For an agreement in Tankari between Raja Shamsher Sen, Mian Surma Sen, Raja Sansar Chand and Raja Raj Singh, to attack Makarsa (Kulu) and seize Bhangal, divide it equally among them see Catalogue B.S.M., No. C.18.
- (100) Presently there is no political unit by the name of Keonthal. At the time of the formation of Himachal Pradesh, Keonthal State was immediately partitioned and merged with Kusumpxi, Theog and Jubbal tehsils. B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, p. 156; See also Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.74.
- (101) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.74.
- (102) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 74-75. When the Gurkhas entered the Simla hills, the contemporary ruler of Keonthal, Raghunath Sen, fled and took shelter in the Suket State where he died later. His son Sansar Sen lost a number of *parganas* after the British annexation of his territories. B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 157-58.
- (103) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.75. Until the decline of the Mughal sovereignty, the chiefs of Bhagat paid the governor of Sirhind an annual *nazrana* of Rs. 750/- and 600 armed men and an equal number of porters for the service of the empire. *Ibid.*
- (104) These were Bhagat, Taksal, forts of Ajeergarh, Sukhechaunpur and Rajgarh.
- (105) B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, p.162.
- (106) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.77; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, p. 170.
- (107) *Ibid.*
- (108) *Ibid.*
- (109) B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 172-73; Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.76.

- (110) For details about 'Dhami Firing Tragedy' see *supra*, Chapter on *Popular Uprisings and Social Reform Movements*.
- (111) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-77.
- (112) For details see *Supra*, account under Bhajji State.
- (113) B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 158-59.
- (114) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.77
- (115) *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, p.170.
- (116) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.78.
- (117) *Ibid.*, p.78; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, p.267.
- (118) For the details concerning the circumstances in which the capital was transferred from the Hat Koti to Jubbal see Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 79.
- (119) For a brief account of the History of Jubbal see also Bhagwan Das, *Tawarikh Jubbal Kohistan*, Urdu, (Simla, 1895), pp. 5-39.
- (120) J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.144.
- (121) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.79; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 168-69
- (122) *Ibid.*, p.160.
- (123) *Ibid.*, p.159
- (124) It is stated that Kirat Chand occupied Kumarsain and gave Karangla to his brother Kartar Singh. According to another version it was Kirat Chand's son Uggar Chand who wrested this area after the death of a local chief Bhambu Rai. On the death of Uggar Chand, one of his sons Sansar Chand got Karangla, whereas two others Sabir Chand and Jai Singh started ruling jointly over Khaneti, Kotgarh and Kotkhai. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.80.
- (125) Capt. C.P. Kennedy, Assistant Deputy Superintendent of the Sikh and Hill States includes the names of Dodra, Kawar, Pundar and Nawar as seperate entities in the list of *Athara Thakurais*.
- (126) Karma Devi, *op.cit.*, pp. 21-22.
- (127) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.83.
- (128) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 84-85; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 150-55.
- (129) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.85-86; B.L. Kapur, *op.cit.*, pp. 122-25.
- (130) For etymology of Lahul and Spiti see Tobdan, *op.cit.*, p. 6 fn. 1-3 and p.62.

- (131) *Journal of Punjab Historical Society*, Vol. VII, p.145. Tobdan, *History and Religions of Lahul* (New Delhi, 1984), pp. 31-62.
- (132) See also Tobdan, *op.cit.*, p.67.
- (133) Karma Devi, *op.cit.*, pp. 24-25.
- (134) For further details see *Infra*, Chapter on *Himachal and the Sikhs*.
- (135) For further details see *Infra*, Chapter VI. For a brief account of the Sikh rule in Kulu and Lahul-Spiti see Tobdan, *op.cit.*, pp. 56-58.

CHAPTER - III

**THE EARLY
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INTRODUCTION

As we have observed in the previous pages the hills of Himachal Pradesh were dotted over with numerous Rajput states which enjoyed varying degrees of independence till the eve of the Turkish invasions. Some of the important hill states during the early medieval period were Bhimnagar or Kangra, Kulu, Bushahr, Lahul, Hindur (Nalagarh), Kahlur (Bilaspur), Dhameri, (Nurpur), Chamba, Mandi and Suket. Of these the most important was the Katoch kingdom of Kangra¹ (earlier a part of the Trigarta empire) which attracted the attention of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in the tenth century.

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni

The Ghaznavide Turks had firmly laid the foundations of an independent state on the western frontiers of Punjab, when Jaipala was struggling hard for the preservation of its independence during the early tenth century. The Hindushahi rulers as they were called, carried on a relentless and determined struggle against the Ghazna Turks from 960 to 1020 A.D. The danger of Ghaznavide attacks increased when Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni ascended the throne of Ghazni in 998 A.D.² Within a short period, Mahmud was able to establish his rule over Herat, Balkh, Bust, and Khurasan. By the end of the tenth century, he was formally

recognised by the Caliph of Baghdad over the entire conquered territory with the title of 'Amin-ul-Millaha-ud-Yamin-ul-Daula'³.

In December 1008 A.D., Sultan Mahmud marched from Ghazni to fight against the confederacy of the Hindu states under the leadership of the Punjab ruler Anandpala. In a pitched battle that was fought near Udabhandpura, Mahmud routed the confederate forces and achieved a complete victory. The defeated Hindus fled towards the fort of Nagarkot in Kangra. The victory opened the way for Mahmud's further advance into the hills into the fort of Nagarkot or Bhimnagar which was not only noted for its strength but also for its untold wealth stored in the temple there since times immemorial.

According to Al Utbi, the Sultan himself joined in the pursuit (of the defeated forces of the Hindushahi ruler, Anandpala) and went after them as far as the fort called Bhimnagar⁴. The sole purpose of Mahmud to raid Nagarkot seems to be to loot the immense treasure and the precious jewels which were offered in the temple by the rich devotees. Al Utbi writes:

'The kings of Hind, the chiefs of that country and the rich devotees, used to amass their treasure and precious jewels, and send them time after time to be presented to the large idol that they might receive a reward for their good deeds and drew near to their God.'⁵ This is supported by Ferishta who informs that:

'The Hindoos, on account of its strength, had deposited the wealth consecrated to their idols by all the neighbouring kingdoms, so that in this fort, there supposed to have been a greater quality of gold, silver etc., than was ever collected in the royal treasure of any prince on earth.'⁶

All accounts agree that the fort of Kangra was famous for its strength as well as its immense treasures. It was thus the greed of Sultan Mahmud for acquiring the untold treasure for which he could not resist the temptation of invading the Kangra fort. Contemporary writer Al Utbi gives the account of the conquest of Kangra fort in the following words:

'The Sultan brought his forces under the fort (of Bhimnagar/ Kangra) and surrounded it and prepared to attack the garrison, vigor-

ously, boldly and wisely. When the defenders saw the hill covered with the armies of plunderers and the arrows ascending towards them like flaming sparks of fire, great fear came upon them, and, calling out for mercy, they opened the gates, and fell on the earth, like sparrows before a hawk, or rain before lightning. Thus did God grant an easy conquest of this fort to the Sultan, and bestowed on him as plunder the products of mines and seas, the ornaments of heads and breasts, to his heart's content.⁸

It appears that the fort of Kangra was left without a garrison by the Katoch ruler and the only defenders seem to be the Brahmins and some servants living in the temple who surrendered without any resistance.⁹

Sultan entered the fort along with Abu Nasar Ahmad Bin Muhammad Farighuni, the ruler of Juzjan and some attendants. Two of his commanders, Altuntash and Asightigin, were appointed to take charge of the treasure of gold and silver and all valuable property, while he himself took charge of the jewels¹⁰.

Mahmud left a garrison in the fort on his departure, which probably lasted till 1043 A.D.

Nagarkot Recovered by the Tomar Chief

The territory belonging to the Katoch house, which extended upto Jullundur in the Punjab plains, was lost due to the Turkish invasion over Nagarkot led by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in 1009. It appears that henceforth the Katoch ruler was forced to shift to Nagarkot which was made the chief capital. The recovery of Nagarkot by the Katoch chiefs subsequent to Sultan Mahmud's invasion is also not recorded anywhere. According to traditional accounts the Katoch rulers were able to regain Nagarkot during the middle of the eleventh century with the help of the Tomar Raja of Delhi.

Tomar chief Mahipal of Delhi is reported to have formed a confederacy of the Indian chiefs in 1043 A.D. with the intensions of putting an end to the Ghaznavide rule in the Punjab. It is further reported that in order to arouse the spirit of his countrymen the Tomar chief pretended to have had a vision. He affirmed that the great idol of Nagarkot, which had been carried off by Sultan Mahmud, appeared to him in a vision and told him that having taken revenge upon Ghazni,

would meet him at Nagarkot in her former temple. The story being widely accepted, great numbers flocked to his standard, and he soon found himself as the head of a large army¹¹.

After having conquered the towns of Hansi, Thanesar etc., and driving out Ghazni garrisons held by Maudad, the grandson of Sultan Mahmud, the Tomar chief entered the hills and laid siege to Nagarkot, which was captured after a siege lasting for four months. An idol exactly resembling the one that was carried away, was then introduced secretly by the night into a garden near the temple. Its discovery in the morning convinced the devotees that the idol had returned from Ghazni. It was then carried with great reverence into the temple and installed there. The story about the recovery of the idol spread far and wide and devotees thronged to the temple in thousands and once again the temple fund became rich with the offerings of gold, silver and jewels¹².

Although the fort of Kangra is said to have been captured by Abdul Rashid (a son of Sultan Mahmud) in 1051-52 A.D., it was soon recovered by the Katoch princes around 1060 A.D. after which it remained in the hands of its owners¹³. At the close of the twelfth century, when Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori encountered Prithviraj Chauhan at the battle of Tarain, (1192 A.D.) the Katoch chief of Kangra also acted as one of the allies of Prithviraj Chauhan. The defeat and death of the Chauhan ruler, however, led to the downfall of the Rajput kingdom and the establishment of the first Turkish dynasty in northern India. The first two houses of the Delhi Sultanate, the Salves (1206-1290 A.D.) and the Khaljis (1290-1320) never paid much of a serious attention towards the Punjab hills, as against the plains of Punjab, which witnessed continuous onslaught by the Turks, and led to the immigration of many Rajput families to the Himachal during the early twelfth century and the foundation of large number of Rajput kingdoms there¹⁴.

Muhammad Tughluq and the Qarachil (Himachal) Expedition

Between the Mughal empire and the Sultanate of Delhi, we come across two serious inroads into the hills of Himachal Pradesh led by the Tughluq sultans, Muhammad Tughluq and Feroz Thughluq. Among the Sultans of the Tughluq dynasty (1320-1414 A.D.) Muhammad bin Tughluq was the first to cherish a dream of conquering the neighbouring countries. One of his projects was sending an expedition against the hill chiefs of the Himalayas.

The Qarachil expedition of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq has been regarded as a part of the Nagarkot expedition which was led in the year 1338 A.D.¹⁵ The name Qarachil appear in several forms. Ferishta writes about it as Himajal or Himachal which is supported by Nizamuddin Ahmad¹⁶. From the account of Ziauddin Barani, it appears that the project was a part of the proposed Khurasan expedition, which Sultan Muhammad Tughluq wanted to bring 'under the dominion of Islam'.¹⁷ The account of Qarachil expedition has been given by Badr Chach in his *Qasaids* under the title 'Fateh Qila-i-Nagarkot'¹⁸. The account of Nagarkot conquest by Muhammad Tughluq is also corroborated by contemporary writer Shams Siraj Afif, the writer of the *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*¹⁹.

That the Nagarkot expedition was led personally by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq in 1338 A.D. is proved from the following verses of Badr Chach: (1) 'The Lord of the times (Muhammad bin Tughluq) conquered the strong fort of Nagarkot in the year 738' (1338 A.D.) (2) 'The great emperor (Muhammad bin Tughluq) arrived at the mighty fortress at night with hundreds and thousands of honours and glories'.²⁰

The objective of Qarachil expedition seems to be to strengthen the northern frontiers of the empire. Ferishta, however, would make us believe that the ultimate object of the Sultan was the conquest of China. Ibn Batuta, the Moorish traveller during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, informs us that early in the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, the Chinese had encroached on the hitherto independent Rajput states in the Himalayas and the Sultan therefore, desired to establish his suzerainty there, which was even otherwise, a place of strategic importance²¹. The conquest of Nagarkot, however, seems to be a part of the plan to complete the chain of fortifications in the north and hence the Qarachil expedition²².

According to Ibn Batuta, Qarachil was held by one of the most powerful infidel rulers. Although Qarachil has been identified with Kurmachal, the old name of Kumaon, a Rajput State in the Kumaon-Garhwal region, more recent researches point out that it was the mid-Himalayan tract of Kulu in the Kangra district against which the expedition was sent²³. This is supported by a local tradition according to which Sikandarpal, the 15th ruler of Kulu State, went to the Sultan of Delhi to seek shelter against the Chinese, who had invaded his kingdom.

The Sultan of Delhi, marched through Kulu and conquered the country as far as Mansrover²⁴.

A large army²⁵ was deputed for the Qarachil expedition and Khusrau Malik²⁶ was instructed to establish military posts at intervals along with the route through the mountains. These posts were to serve two objectives; facilitating the transport of provisions and serving as places of refuge in case of retreat. The royal troops captured Jidya and the surrounding country at the foot of the Himalayas. Khusrau Malik, however, transgressed the Sultan's orders. Flushed with preliminary victories, he took the whole of the army or a detached force across the mountains into the territory of Tibet. There, the army was overtaken by the rains followed by an outbreak of plague and thus panic seized the Tughluq army. The mountaineers got an upper hand. They hurled blocks of stones from the mountain tops and the military posts established to safeguard the retreat fell into disorder. It is stated that only a few survived, to speak about the disastrous results of this expedition²⁷.

From the above account of the Qarachil expedition, it becomes clear that the Nagarkot expedition was personally led by the Sultan in 1338 A.D. and the fort was wrested from Raja Prithvi Chand (1330-1345 A.D.) who was a contemporary of Muhammad bin Tughluq. It appears that the Katoch ruler remained tributary to the Tughluq Sultan until the regime of Sultan Feroz Tughluq, when the Kangra ruler Shastra Chand repudiated his allegiance to the Sultan. This instigated another attack in the fourteenth century to bring the Kangra ruler into submission.

Sultan Feroz Tughluq and Kangra

The medieval Muslim chronicles²⁸ refer to the capture of the fort of Kangra by Sultan Feroz Tughluq sometime in 1360 A.D. when Katoch ruler Rup Chand²⁹ was ruling over the Katoch kingdom. According to these chronicles, the father of Shastra Chand, who was deputed by Sultan Feroz Tughluq remained loyal to the Sultan. After him Shastra Chand also acted as a nominee of the Sultan but Rup Chand was held guilty of contumacy. There is a reference in the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* about the harassment of the Muslims by the Rajput chiefs of the hills who continued a guerilla warfare with a view to throw off the yoke imposed upon them.

In keeping with this policy, Raja Rup Chand, during the early

years of his reign, set out with an army on the raiding expedition and plundered the plains up to Delhi. While returning laden with booty, he was encountered by his contemporary Sultan of Kashmir, Shahabuddin (1356-1374 A.D.). The Katoch chief was defeated and had to surrender all his booty and swore loyalty to him. This incident is also mentioned in a different way by Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini* wherein the achievements of the Kashmiri Sultan are highlighted and so is Rup Chand's fleeing back to Kangra.

To bring back the Katoch ruler Rup Chand to submission Sultan Feroz Tughluq decided to undertake a military expedition to Kangra. For this purpose, he recruited a large army and equipped it adequately with several weapons of war. Afif, who wrote the *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi* in the closing years of the fourteenth century, informs that on his return from the second expedition of Bengal (in June, 1361 A.D.), the Sultan spent nearly four years before he invaded Sind. During the same period the Sultan attempted to conquer Daultabad but returned from Bayana. This must have taken him approximately a year. On his return from Bayana, the Sultan spent nearly seven months in the vicinity of Sirhind and then marched to Nagarkot. Hence two years must have elapsed between his return from Bengal and the invasion of Nagarkot³⁰.

The *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi*, written in 1370 A.D. (during the life time of Sultan Feroz Tughluq) also states that the Sultan returned to Delhi from his expedition to Jajnagar in 1360 A.D.³¹ On the basis of many other sources, it appears certain that the Nagarkot expedition of the Sultan occurred immediately after that of Jajnagar and just before the Sind expedition. Since the latter took place in the year 1361 A.D., the Nagarkot expedition may be placed a few months before that or in the year 1360 A.D.

The account of Nagarkot expedition given in the Afif's *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*³² is as under:

'Afterwards he (Sultan Feroz Tughluq) marched with his army from Delhi towards Nagarkot, and passing by Nakhsh-nuh-Garhi (?) he arrived with his army at Nagarkot, which he found to be very strong and secure. The *Rai* shut himself up in the fort and the Sultan's forces plundered all his country.' The same source continues:

'The *Rai* of Nagarkot withdrew into the keep of his stronghold, which was invested by the royal forces in double, nay, in tenfold lines. *manjaniks* and *arradas* were erected on both sides, and so many stones were discharged that they clashed in the air and were dashed to pieces. For six months the siege went on, and both sides exhibited great courage and endurance. At length fortune inclined to the Sultan'. Thus after a long siege of six months, the Katoch chief was forced to surrender. Afif³³ gives a fanciful account of the Raja's submission. He informs that one day while Sultan was personally directing the siege operations, he noticed the Raja standing at the top of the fort, stretching his hands in humility and submission. The Sultan, in response to these submissive gestures, waved his handkerchief and directed him to descend. Accordingly the Raja along with members of his family and chiefs, came down. Feroz Tughluq accepted the submission and patted the back of the Raja and also awarded him a robe and a red canopy³⁴.

The contemporary accounts make it clear that Sultan Feroz Tughluq was not in a position to conquer the fort of Nagarkot. He probably found a pretext to accept the Raja's submission and made peace with him. This is also confirmed by the later accounts such as Jahangir's autobiography and *Shash Fateh Kangra*. In all probability, the fort was restored to the Katoch chief and no Muslim garrison was left there³⁵.

Sultan Feroz Shah's Visit to Jwala Mukhi Temple

After the submission of the Raja of Nagarkot, Sultan Feroz Tughluq decided to visit the temple of Jwala Mukhi, with a view to desecrate the idol and to demolish the temple and obtain its treasures as well as its rich collection of manuscripts. It is stated that the temple contained a unique collection of one thousand and three hundred books on various subjects.

Jwala Mukhi is situated on an ancient site in the Dehra Gopipur tehsil of Kangra district, on the road from Kangra town to Nadaun at the foot of the hills. It is famous for the temple of goddess Jwala Mukhi 'one with the flaming mouth'³⁶. There is no idol of any kind, the flaming fissure being considered as the fiery mouth of the goddess whose headless body is said to be in the temple of Bhawan.

According to the traditional accounts, the people of Nagarkot

told Feroz Tughluq that the idol, worshipped by the Hindus was the image of Nausheba whom they connect with the visit of Alexander to this place. Hindus took fancy for Nausheba and erected her stone idol and began to worship it³⁷. The tradition, however, appears to be a mere myth. Hindus worship Jwala Mukhi as a symbolic personification of the volcano. The goddess of Jwala was also called 'Maha Maya' and is regarded as the wife of Mahesh (Shiva) in the Hindu mythology. Later writers also named it as Bhawani.

When Sultan Feroz Shah Tughluq reached the site of the Jwala Mukhi temple, he is stated to have summoned all the Rais, Zamindars and Ranas, accompanying him and 'rebuked them for worshipping the idol'. It is further stated that at first the Sultan thought of burning down the idol, but after the conclusion of peace with the Rajas, the idea was given up³⁸.

A library was attached to the temple which consisted of 1300 books. The Sultan, out of deep love for learning, took possession of these and had some of them translated. The famous writer of the age, Izzuddin Khalid Khani, translated into Persian verse, one of the books on the rising and setting of the seven planets, their good and evil impact, auguries and omens. The translation was named after the Sultan and called *Dalail-i-Ferozshahi*. Maulana Abdul Qadir Badauni read it in 1592 A.D., at Lahore and was moderately impressed. He saw some other translations too dealing with subjects like *Pingal* (prosody), *Akhara* called 'Paturbazi' (singing and dancing) and regarded them unprofitable and trivial³⁹.

The *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi* relates how the Katoch chief persuaded Sultan Feroz Tughluq not to demolish the temple. The Raja requested that since he had submitted to him, the order for the demolition of the temple, which was sacred to his subjects, be withdrawn. He also said that the late Sultan Muhammad Tughluq had also spared the temple. Feroz Tughluq, in deference to, and imitating his deceased patron, withdrew the order⁴⁰.

The fact that Sultan Feroz Tughluq failed to conquer the fort of Nagarkot, the candid confession of the writer of the *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi* that he exhibited great patience, and also the widely current rumour about the Hindus recorded by Shams Siraj Afif, lead one to conclude that conscious of the strength of the chief of Nagarkot, the Sultan could not or did not desecrate the temple of Jwala Mukhi⁴¹.

Amir Timur's Invasion and Kangra

With Feroz Shah Tughluq's reign came the beginning of the end of the Tughluq dynasty. It was not only the game of king-making after the death of Feroz Tughluq which effected the political situation of the time, but the invasion of Amir Timur⁴² in 1398 A.D. which also gave a rude shock to the crumbling structure of the Delhi Sultanate.

During Timur's invasion of India, Megh Chand was ruling over Kangra. After waging a relentless war in Central Asia, Timur turned towards India. Fortunately for him the time seemed to be ripe for an easy over-run of the country by a determined and able commander. Punjab was torn within by incessant struggles which took place on each turn of the wheel of fortune at Delhi.

After plundering Delhi, Amir Timur decided to traverse Punjab through the Shiwalik range. Somewhere in the hills there, Rattan Singh⁴³ ruling the area between Shiwalik and other ranges - probably a part of the present day districts of Hoshiarpur and Kangra - opposed his progress but was defeated. Here in the hills, on the way to Nagarkot and from there to Jammu, Timur had to fight thirteen battles and in the process captured seven forts.

Though Amir Timur is said to have conquered Kangra, it seems more probable that he was allowed to proceed un-challenged through this region. There is no mention of the sack of Jwala Mukhi, nor the fort of Kangra was touched. Timur seems to have marched from Haridwar through the present day districts of Ambala, Hoshiarpur and Kangra, from where he proceeded to Jammu via Pathankot.

Timur is said to have taken seven forts and had twenty-four engagements. In the description of a period of thirty day's march, no state except that of Kangra is mentioned by name. Only three rulers elsewhere are named, Rattan Singh, the ruler of territory around Sirmur, Devi Rai, beyond Kangra, and Shaikha, who claimed the area as far as Lahore.

It may be safely assumed that in the hilly areas, the Katoch rulers of Kangra remained almost independent. After Timur's return, Hari Chand ascended the throne of Kangra in 1405 A.D. He was followed by Karam Chand, Ghamand Chand and Raja Sansar Chand.

The Lodis and Kangra

Local tradition connects some sacred places in Kangra with Sultan Sikandar Lodi's visit and his iconoclastic activities. Of course, his religious policy, if it can be described as anti-Hindu, might have created some problems in the hill areas as well.

During the period of the last Lodi ruler, Ibrahim Lodi, Punjab and its hilly areas acquired a place in history once again because of Babur's invasions. Of the five invasions of Hindustan by Babur, only four were directed towards Hindustan proper. His capture of Bajaur in 1519 A.D. may be treated as a prelude to his subsequent onslaughts. By 1525 A.D. Babur had established his outposts at Lahore, Sialkot and in the same year after passing through Sialkot, he turned towards Delhi via Malot near Kangra. Daulat Khan, the governor of Punjab and his son Ghazi Khan, took refuge in the forest below Kangra. Babur captured the fort and made Daulat Khan a prisoner. Babur, however, does not seem to have engaged the Raja of Kangra and the later also may have avoided a direct encounter with Babur. In 1526 A.D. Babur defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi and established Mughal rule in India which considerably changed the position of the hill states of Himachal.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- (1) For details see Chapter II, *The Early Political History*.
- (2) For details about the campaigns of Sultan Mahmud see Mohammad Habib, *Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni*, Bombay, 1927 and Muhammad Nazim, *Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna*, Cambridge, 1931
- (3) It was on account of the above title that his house came to be called the Yamini house.
- (4) Al Utbi, *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*. (Delhi reprint), Vol. II p.34. According to Utbi the fortress was called Bhimnagar, from a mythical ancestor of the Katoch family, possibly a former Raja, by whom it was founded, or perhaps from Bhimsen, the hero of the *Mahabharata*. Ferishta calls it Bheem. Ferishta, *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, tr. Briggs, *History of the Rise of Muhammadan Power in India*, (New Delhi reprint) Vol. I. p.128
- (5) 'Sultan bad azeen fateh.... Nagarkot wa shikastan butkhana an ja namooda rawan shud... Dran ahad an Qila baqqbzai Bhim mausoom wa mash-hoor bood...' Al Utbi, *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, Persian text, p.34.
- (6) Ferishta, *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Lucknow text, p.25
- (7) For a description of the Kangra fort see chapter on *Early Political History: The Rajput Kingdoms*.
- (8) Al Utbi, *op.cit.*, Vol.II p.34
- (9) Wolseley Haig, *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol.III, (New Delhi, 1965), p.16.
- (10) The booty obtained from Kangra fort included stamped coins amounting to seventy thousand thousands, royal *dirhams* and the gold and silver ingots amounting to seven hundred thousands, four hundred *mans* in weight, besides wearing apparel and fine garments of *sus*. The booty also included a canopy, made of fine linen of Rum, forty yards long and twenty broad, supported on two golden and silver poles, which had been cast in moulds, Al Utbi, *op.cit.*, pp.34-35.
- (11) Ferishta, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, pp. 18-19; Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, tr. int.;

Khwand Mir, *Habib-us-Siyar*.

The conquest of Punjab by Sultan Mahmud seems to be only partial. It appears that no permanent garrisons were established anywhere till 1023 A.D., except that of Nagarkot. The warfare between the Hindushahi kings against the Ghaznavides continued till the death of Bhim Pal, the last of the line, after which the Hindushahi kingdom was overthrown, sometime in 1026 A.D.

- (12) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol I., p.121.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p. 123. The contemporary chief of Kangra during its re-occupation is stated to be Padam Chand.
- (14) For details see chapter on 'Early Political History'. The troubled period during the thirteenth century also gave shelter to a large number of rebel Turks. For example: (1) The flight of Nizamul-Mulk Muhammad Junaidi and his followers in the Sirmur hills during the rule of Sultan Raziyah (2) Flight of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud's step brother Jalaluddin Masud Shah from his *iqta* of Sambhal to Santurgarh in the Sirmur hills (3) Flight of Qutlugh Khan and his officers to Santurgarh in 1256 A.D. It appears that these rebel Turks were given shelter by the local Ranas of Himachal. For details see Minhajuddin Siraj, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, tr. Major Raverty, Delhi, reprint. See also P.C. Thakur, *Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban and His Times*, Ph.D. Thesis, H.P. University, 1984 (unpublished), pp. 99-100.
- (15) Sir Wolseley Haig, *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, July, 1922, cited in Agha Mahdi Husain, *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq* (Delhi reprint, 1972), p.126 fn.1. For date see *Badr-i-Chach, Qasaid*, with Urdu commentary by Abdul Majid Khan (Lucknow), p.103 See also Badauni and Yahiya Sirhindi for the same date.
- (16) Ferishta, *op.cit.*, text, p. 135.
- (17) Ziauddin Barani, *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*, text,p.477
- (18) Badr Chach, *op.cit.*, p.103
- (19) Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*, Text.p.187.
- (20). Badr Chach, *op.cit.*, p.103; Afif also records that the Nagarkot expedition was led personally by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. Afif, *op.cit.*, text,p. 187.
- (21) This however, is refuted by Agha Mahdi Husain who asserts that Ibn Batuta's account of the Qarachil expedition is not based on an eye witness account and that the expedition had been over before Ibn Batuta's arrival in Delhi. A.M. Husain, *op.cit.*, p.127,fn.
- (22) *Ibid.*, pp.128-29
- (23) See Gardner Brown's article in *Aligarh University Magazine*, 1925, cited in A.M. Husain, *op.cit.*, p.129.

- (24) Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. XVI.
- (25) Badauni informs that the Sultan sent a force of 80,000. This is supported by Haji-ud-Dabir. Barani, *op.cit.*, text, p.477 and Haji-ud-Dabir, *Arabic History of Gujarat*, III,p.877, cited in A.M. Husain, *op.cit.*, p.130. Isami and Ibn Batuta mention the number as 100,000. *Ibid.*
- (26) Khusrav Malik, the nephew of Muhammad Tughluq was made the commander of the expedition. Ferishta, *op.cit.*, text., Vol.I, p.240.
- (27) For further details see A.M. Husain, *op.cit.* pp.130-31.
- (28) Sultan Feroz Tughluq's attack on the Kangra fort is described by contemporary writer Shams Siraj Afif in his *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi* and in the *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi*, written by an anonymous writer under the direction of Sultan Feroz Tughluq in 1370 A.D. Among the later sources reference may be made to: (1) *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* by Muhammad Qasim Ferishta (1606 A.D.); (2) *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* by Yahiya Sirhindī (written in the middle of the 15th century); (3) Emperor Jahangir's *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* and (4) Shahnawaz Khan's *Maasir-ul-Umarah*.
- Among the non-Persian sources, the most important are Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* and Manik Chand's *Dharam Chand Natak* (written about 1565 A.D.).
- (29) Rup Chand's name is found in *Dharam Chand Natak* of Bard Manik Chand in which reference is also made about capture of Kangra fort by Sultan Feroz Tughluq.
- (30) See M.S. Ahluwalia and others (contributed), *Himachal: Past, Present and Future* (Simla, 1975), pp. 68-69.
- (31) *Sirat*, (A.M.U. MS), p.75 Neither Afif nor *Sirat* has given the date of this expedition. But *Sirat* (A.M.U. MS. p.68) clearly states that the Sultan returned to Delhi from his expedition to Jaunjagar in 762 A.H./1360 A.D. Yahiya, Badauni and Ferishta also opine that the Nagarkot expedition must have been after Jaunjagar and before the Sind expedition. This works out to be in 1360 A.D. See also J.M. Banerjee, *History of Firoz Shah Tughluq* (Delhi, 1967) p. 53, fn.212.
- (32) Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Delhi reprint, Vol. III, pp.227-28. The account slightly differs from the one given by Ferishta in the *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* and Shahnawaz Khan's *Maasir-ul-Umarah*.
- (33) Shams Siraj Afif, text, p.189. The Author of *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi* also supports the above version and says that the Raja of Nagarkot along with his relatives sought forgiveness which the Sultan was gracious enough to accord. Almost the same facts are also recorded in the *Dharam Chand Natak* wherein it is written that Raja Rup Chand went forth to meet the Sultan and bowed very low. The Sultan put his hand on Rup Chand's back and reportedly gave him an umbrella, and an embroidered dress of honour, besides many other gifts.
- (34) *Ibid* , *Sirat* (A.M.U. MS), p.76, cited in J.M. Banerjee, *op.cit.* p.43, fn.208.

- (35) Afif, the contemporary authority also does not say anything about a garrison having been left in the fort. Similary the *Maasir-ul-Umarah* also confirms the conclusion that the Kangra fort was not occupied. Raja Rup Chand died in about 1375 A.D. Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol.I. p.131.
- (36) The famous Jwala Mukhi temple is built over a fissure at the lease of a high range of hills, twenty miles to the south-east of Kangra, from which the inflammable gas has continued to issue from times immemorial. The present temple of Jwala Mukhi is built against the sides of a ravine just over the cliff from which the gas escapes. Its outside is made plain in modern Muslim style (of plaster and paint) with a gilt dome and gilt pinnacle.
- (37) Nausheba is identified to be the wife of Alexander.
- (38) *Sirat (A.M.U., Aligarh, MS)*, p.76; Ferishta, Briggs tr p.454 wrongly states that the idol was broken.
- (39) *Ibid.*
- (40) Annonymous, *Sirat-i-Ferozshahi*, p.76. Afif, on the other hand, refers to a rumour spread by the Hindus that Sultan Feroz Tughluq went to see the temple of Jwala Mukhi and presented a golden canopy to be hung over the idol, and adds that this imputation against the Sultan was false and had been concocted by the Hindus to slander and malign the Sultan, who was a pious, devout, true and god-fearing Muslim to have held the idol in deep detestation, and subjected it to indignity. Afif, *Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi*, text, p.187. Raja Ratan Chand of Bilaspur is also said to have submitted to Sultan Feroz Tughluq and received his favours. Akshar Singh, *op.cit.* p.14.
- (41) M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, pp. 71-72.
- (42) For Timur's invasion see *Malfuzat-i-Timuri* or *Tuzuk-i-Timuri*, tr. in Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*. Vo. III and Sharfuddin Yazdi's *Zafarnama* in *Ibid*. See also K.S. Lal, *Twilight of the Sultanate*, Delhi, 1963.
- (43) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetters, Sirmur*, (Simla, 1969), p.50, wherein Raja Ratan Parkash has been identified as Sirmur chief. Ratan Parkash, however, ruled from 1460 to 1490 A.D. whereas Timur invaded India during 1398-99 A.D.

CHAPTER - IV

HIMACHAL
AND
THE MUGHAL RULERS

The Mughals and the Kangra Group of Hills

The Mughals and the Chamba

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The Mughals and the Kangra Group of Hill States

The political and administrative structure of the hill states underwent a substantial change during the Mughal rule. As noted earlier, the Kangra hills were an added source of attraction due to the wealth and sanctity of the famous Jwala Mukhi temple. It was plundered by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni due to the fabulous wealth it contained. Subsequently, the Kangra hills were also raided by Sultan Muhammad Tughluq and Feroz Tughluq. However, the annexation of Kangra hills was never seriously thought of partly due to the inaccessibility of the hill areas and partly due to the Sultans involvement in the subjugation of the plains. Needless to say that the hilly areas did not attract serious attention of the Sultans of Delhi and the hill states of Himachal virtually remained independent during the Sultanate period.

The political situation, however, underwent a radical change under the great Mughals beginning at least from the rule of Akbar, the Great. Akbar's period is marked not only for military expansion of his empire, but also for synthesisation of religion and culture. During Akbar's reign we notice for the first time an evolution of a new cultural phenomena in which 'traditional Indian culture mingled with the finery of the Persian court-life.'

Mughal-Afghan Contest and the Kangra Hills

At the time of Akbar's accession to the throne (1556 A.D.), Punjab was under the rule of Sikandar Shah Sur (a nephew of Sher Shah Suri). He was defeated at Sirhind by the Mughals and fled into the Shiwalik hills, around Nurpur and Kangra. Akbar (as a boy of fourteen years) went in pursuit of the fugitive Afghan under the nominal command of an army. According to Abul Fazl, Dharam Chand, the chief of Kangra, came to Nurpur, where Akbar had camped, and made his submission.¹

Right from his childhood days, Akbar was thus drawn towards Himachal hills and his interest in the hill affairs gradually increased which is known from several of his campaigns in the Kangra hills which continued till the last stages of his reign. The submission of Raja Dharam Chand of Kangra at Nurpur, led to the attempt on the part of Akbar to consolidate his empire subsequently by stretching it into the hills of the Punjab.

Although it is not certain whether Akbar personally came so far deep into the hills, he sent an army in pursuit of Sikandar Shah Sur, who by now had taken refuge further down in the deep jungles and received assistance from the chief of Nurpur, Raja Bakht Mal². According to Nizamuddin Ahmad, the Mughal forces encountered the Afghans near the Shiwalik hills and the army was 'elated with preliminary victories' after which it continued to penetrate still further in the hills till it reached Nagarkot.

Mughal Forces Advance to Kangra

In 1557 A.D., Sikandar Shah Sur left his retreat in the hills and invaded Punjab. When Akbar advanced against him with his forces, Sikandar Sur sought refuge in the strong fortress of Maukot³. The Mughal forces seized the fort and hard pressed its garrison (after a long siege of eight months) to surrender on terms as dictated by the besiegers. Sikandar Shah Sur had to send his son Abdur Rahman along with Ghazi Khan Sur, as hostages apart from the tribute which also included some war elephants.

On 27th Ramzan A.H. 964 (July, 1557 A.D.), the fort was surrendered by Sikandar Shah Sur and it was then put under the charge

of Abul Qasim⁴. From that time onwards, the Mughal authority in the Kangra hills became much more precise and detailed as is known on the basis of a number of contemporary Mughal histories.

Kangra Ruler Submits

The Mughal army, elated with preliminary victories in the Kangra hills, penetrated further till it reached Nagarkot (Kangra). The fort was invaded. After putting up a feeble resistance, its ruler, Raja Dharam Chand, submitted and appeared personally at the royal camp⁵. The Kangra ruler was thus the first among the chiefs of the Shiwalik hills, to have offered submission to emperor Akbar. He remained loyal to the Mughals till his death in 1563 A.D.

In Kangra, Raja Manikya Chand was succeeded by Dharam Chand. The former was a learned ruler and is also known as the author of the play, *Dharam Chand Natak*.⁶ During the reign of Manikya Chand, the Katoch ruling family of Kangra continued to accept the Mughal suzerainty. His successor, Jai Chand, however, due to some unknown reason, incurred the displeasure of Akbar in 1570 A.D. He was arrested with the help of Raja Ram Chand of Guler (one of his kinsmen) and kept in confinement in Delhi.

Revolt of Bidhi Chand

During the period of Raja Jai Chand's confinement in Delhi, his minor son, Bidhi Chand, believing his father to be dead, revolted against the Mughals and seized the throne of Kangra with the help of Raja Gopi Chand (Gobind Chand) Jaswal of Jaswan⁷. The revolt in the Kangra compelled emperor Akbar to initiate another campaign against Bidhi Chand to bring him into submission.

Accordingly, Akbar sent Khan-i-Jahan Hussain Quli Khan, to march against Nagarkot, capture it and hand it over to Raja Birbal, to whom it was assigned as a *jagir*⁸. Meanwhile, Raja Jai Chand too appeared to have returned to Nagarkot⁹ and took over the command to defend the siege of the Kangra fort. Hussain Quli Khan, along with Mubarak Khan Gakhar, Raja Birbal and others, marched towards Kangra to annex the fort. On the way (via Pathankot), when he reached Dhameri (Nurpur), its ruler (who was a relative of Jai Chand) sent two *vakils* with some tribute and

also offered to join the imperial forces to effect the reduction of Kangra fort¹⁰.

When the Mughal forces reached Kotla, their further progress was checked by the Kangra troops, who had been holding its fort and had refused to surrender the fortress of Kotla. Hussain Quli Khan and other Mughal commanders reached the hill opposite the fortress and opened fire on it through the guns brought along with them. It resulted in the shattering of masonry and killing of a number of people who had stood inside its walls. The Mughal pressure on the fort compelled the besieged to leave the Kotla for fortress which was occupied and handed over to its original owner, the Raja of Guler, as a reward for the latter's loyalty to the Mughals.

The victorious Mughal forces now marched towards the celebrated fort of Kangra and on reaching there invested the temple of *Maha Mai* in the town. The defenders held on bravely but in vain. According to Nizamuddin, 'all the inmates were done to death and the buildings were razed to ground for making a camping ground¹².' The main fort of Kangra was now invested. To reduce the fort and its inmates to submission, all known methods of warfare were adopted which included construction of *sabats*, throwing up of mounds and batteries, mounting of guns on an adjoining hillock and firing at the fort from all sides. Hardpressed by the besieging forces, Raja Bidhi Chand vacated the fort and escaped to the jungles¹³. The remaining garrison, however, continued to resist the Mughal onslaught.

As the siege of Kangra fort was in progress, news reached about the rebellion of Ibrahim Hussain Mirza in the Punjab, which compelled Hussain Quli Khan to raise the siege¹⁴ by forcing a treaty upon the Raja of Nagarkot, on the following terms:

- (i) The Raja (of Nagarkot) was to send his daughter to the imperial *harem*;
- (ii) To furnish a suitable *peshkash*;
- (iii) To send a son of his or a kinsman of stature to the Mughal commander, so that in case of disapproval of the treaty by the emperor, he may be kept as a hostage till the fort was surrendered;

- (iv) To pay a large sum to Raja Birbal, as Nagarkot had been assigned to him in *jagir*; and finally
- (v) Raja Gopi Chand was to come and pay homage to the Mughal commander¹⁵.

According to Nizamuddin Ahmad, the Kangra Rajputs agreed to the terms after one of the brothers of Hussain Quli Khan came to the fort as a guarantee of the safe return of the Raja. The siege was finally raised, Raja Jai Chand set at liberty and the latter resumed his position as the ruler of the state¹⁶.

Permanent Settlement in The Kangra Hills by Raja Todar Mal

In order to have his firm hold over the Kangra group of hills, emperor Akbar decided to have a permanent settlement in the Kangra group of hills. It was worked out by Akbar's great Finance Minister, Raja Todar Mal in 1573 A.D. It appears that soon after the expedition of 1572 A.D., Akbar deputed Raja Todar Mal to Kangra to undertake the revenue settlement of some of the hill states of the Kangra group¹⁷. Raja Todar Mal is stated to have carried out his *bandobast* in the sixty-six villages in the Kangra valley¹⁸.

Nominal Suzerainty Leads to Revolt

Due to the unsuccessful campaigns of Akbar, the Kangra hills do not appear to have been effectively subjugated and annexed to the Mughal empire. That the Mughal supremacy could not be established in the Kangra hills is clear from the fact that after the death of Raja Jai Chand in 1585 A.D., his son Bidhi Chand raised a standard of revolt by forming a confederation of the adjoining hill chiefs under his own leadership. The rebellion broke out in the outer hills in the area between Jammu and Kangra during the year 1588-89 A.D.

On hearing about the revolt of the hill chiefs, emperor Akbar despatched Zain Khan Koka (Akbar's foster-brother) from Lahore with a large force, on Sept. 12, 1590 A.D., to bring the hill chiefs into subjugation. The revolt was put down by the Mughal commander and about thirteen hill Rajas submitted, accompanied the commander to the royal court and presented valuable presents in the form of tribute to the emperor¹⁹.

To ensure the fidelity of the hill Rajas, Akbar initiated the policy of retaining as hostages at his court, a prince or a near relative of the ruling chief from each state. During emperor Jahangir's reign, we are told that there were twenty-two young princes from the hill states, in attendance on the emperor.²⁰

In 1594-95 A.D., there was another rebellion in the Kangra hills. This time the lead was taken by the chief of Jasrota.²¹ Emperor Akbar sent a Mughal force under Shaikh Farid and Raja Jagat Singh of Amber to crush the revolt in 1594 A.D. The Mughal forces advanced towards Jasrota and on their way brought the chiefs on Jammu, Ramgarh and Sambha to submission. In the Himachal hills, Raja Basu of Mau also submitted without much resistance. The triumphant march of the Mughal forces made the Jasrota chief panicy and he fled into deep jungles. The Mughal forces, however, continued to pursue him till he was taken by surprise, captured and brought to the court under the escort of Ali Muhammad.²²

Attempts were now made to reduce the fortress of Jasrota. It was after a sustained effort that Farid and Hussain captured the fortress, whereupon the remaining rebels fled into the jungles. The efforts of Hussain Beg and other commanders in capturing the fortress were greatly commended by Farid who rewarded them richly.²³ Raja Balbhadra of Lakhapur (near Jasrota) also submitted whereupon the fortress was placed under the charge of Muhammad Khan Turkoman and the royal forces proceeded towards Guler. The latter also submitted and saved his state from annexation. It was here that the Rani of Nagarkot (whose son was kept as a hostage at Akbar's court) also sent a *vakil*, to pay respects and to show her loyalty to the Mughals.²⁴ Thus the second rebellion in the Kangra and adjoining hills was also successfully countered by the Mughal forces and the entire territory between Jammu and Nagarkot was brought under submission by Shaikh Farid, who was the *Mir-i-bakshi* (Pay-master General) of emperor Akbar.²⁵

There was another rebellion in Kangra hills in 1596 A.D., which was led by Raja Basu, who was absent in the Punjab during the last expedition of Shaikh Farid. On returning to his state once again he rebelled against the Mughal domination and harassed the imperial contingent left in the fort. To put down the insurrection, Rustam was despatched towards the Shiwalik hills on 11th July, 1596 A.D.²⁶ to help

Qazi Hussain, who had been earlier left at the fortress of Mau. The second attempt on the part of Raja Basu also failed and the fort was re-captured by the royal forces without much difficulty. Abul Fazl adds that in April 1598 A.D., Raja Maluk Chand²⁷ laid down the arms and was sent to the royal court under the custody of Raja Jagat Singh. He was pardoned by the emperor of his past misconduct.²⁸

Raja Basu is reported to have revolted again in 1602 A.D. The emperor sent Madho Singh secretly to effect the arrest of the rebel but he managed to escape the wrath of emperor, due to the mediation of Prince Salim on his behalf. The Raja is said to have enjoyed a *mansab* of 1500 under Akbar. The remaining period of the Kangra ruler Bidhi Chand, however, appears to have passed uneventfully and he died in about 1605 A.D.

From the above account it becomes clear that inspite of serious efforts on the part of the imperial forces, the subjugation of the Kangra and its adjoining hills was never completely effected. It was only left to emperor Jahangir to conquer and annex the Himachal hills to the Mughal empire.²⁹

EMPEROR JAHANGIR AND KANGRA

When Jahangir ascended the throne of Delhi on 24th October, 1605 A.D., Tilok Chand was the ruler of Kangra. We have seen in the previous pages that inspite of his best efforts, the Mughal forces during Akbar's reign could not subjugate the Kangra fort. The Kangra chief remained in continuous possession of the fort and due to his strong position and the geographical situation of the fort, he never cared to pay homage to the Mughals. However, emperor Jahangir, from the very first, was determined to conquer the fort of Kangra and was successful in his efforts after a long siege of the fort in 1620 A.D. In his autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, he proudly claims his success. He writes:

'From the time when the voice of Islam and the sound of the established religion of Muhammad reached Hindustan, not one of the Sultans of lofty dignity had obtained victory over it.'³⁰

In March 1615 A.D. emperor Jahangir deputed Shaikh Farid Murtaza Khan, the governor of the Punjab³¹ alongwith Suraj Mal, son of Raja Basu, as second in command to reduce the fort of Kangra³² On the

security of Murtaza Khan, the emperor also released Raja Man(?) from Gwalior fort, restored his *mansab* and sent him alongwith the Mughal commander to the campaign.³³

We have already seen in the account of Chamba that Raja Suraj Mal was the strongest chief in the hills and he, in alliance with the Chamba ruler (Janardan Varman) rebelled unsuccessfully against the Mughals. After his death all his belongings were surrendered by his host, the Chamba ruler, and these were handed over to the Mughal State. Similarly, Raja Man succeeded Murtaza Khan as a commander to lead the Kangra compaign after the latter's death. However, the first Kangra campaign during Jahangir's rule did not result in a success. This is known from the emperor's autobiography itself.

It is stated in the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* that when Raja Man arrived at Lahore, he heard that Sangram, (?) one of the *zamindars* of the Punjab, had attacked his place and had taken possession of a part of his province. The Raja proceeded against the chief and the latter fled and took refuge in the hills. Raja Man pursued him there. When Sangram saw that he had no way to flee, he resorted to fight. A bullet struck Raja Man and he was killed. The siege of Kangra fort was then deferred once again.³⁴

The first attempt on the part of emperor Jahangir, to capture the Kangra fort, did not materialise. The enterprise, however, was not abandoned and we are told that in 1617 A.D., on his return from Deccan, Raja Suraj Mal³⁵ of Nurpur, asked the emperor to allow him to revive the project of capturing the fort of Kangra. Jahangir left the matter to Shahjahan to decide about the feasibility of the proposal and on receiving a favourable report, the permission was granted and the Prince was made incharge of the overall operations.

Prince Shahjahan selected Suraj Mal and Shah Quli Khan Muhammad Taqi, his own *bakshi*, for the command. A large number of soldiers and *ahadis* (gunmen) were also selected for the Kangra campaign in Sept. 1617.³⁶

Suraj Mal, as already pointed out, was interested in going back to the hills on some pretext or the other and wanted to extend his sway over the Kangra hills. Consequently, he picked up quarrels with Muhammad Taqi with a view to get rid of him. Without knowing the real intentions of Suraj Mal, emperor Jahangir re-called Taqi. The emperor was only

concerned about the conquest of the fort and did not worry about the generals or devices which were to be employed to subdue it. Likewise, Suraj Mal also sent most of the other generals and loyal soldiers back to their *jagirs*.

Having got rid of those, who were loyal to Jahangir, Suraj Mal defeated the loyal *ahadis* under Sayed Saffi and killed many of them. The Sayed and his soldiers fought bravely but in vain.³⁷ After having killed the Sayed, Raja Suraj Mal attacked and plundered the *parganas* at the foot of the hills, then under the control of Itmad-ud-Daula, the father of Mughlani Begum. The siege of Kangra fort was thus again abandoned.

After the recall of Taqi, Raja Bikramajit,³⁸ a veteran and loyal general, was sent to besiege the fort. On the news of the rebellion of Suraj Mal, Jahangir also sent Abdul Aziz against the rebel and then to Kangra³⁹. Another general, Tusam Bahadur was also sent there to help Abdul Aziz. Now the charge of conquering the fort was placed in the hands of Prince Shahjahan. The latter advised Bikramajit to apply all possible means to suppress the rebellion and reduce the fort of Kangra.⁴⁰

Raja Bikramajit, marched from Gujarat to fight against the rebel at the head of a considerable army. The imperial order was to dispose off Suraj Mal in the first instance and then to make an attack on the fort. On the approach of Raja Bikramajit, Suraj Mal prepared to give him a fight. When hard pressed by the royal forces, he fled through Pathankot to the strong fort of Mau in the hills and prepared for a fresh fight from there.⁴¹

Raja Bikramajit, at the head of the Mughal forces, soon reached the place and laid siege to the fort. The siege lasted for some time after which Suraj Mal was forced to vacate the fort and flee towards the Nurpur fort which was built by his father Raja Basu.⁴² The fort of Mau was captured by Bikramajit and he now pursued the fugitive chief Suraj Mal. The latter was compelled to leave Nurpur and seek shelter in the fort of Taragarh, which belonged to the Raja of Chamba.⁴³ After a long siege, Raja Suraj Mal was defeated and he fled to Chamba where he died and his entire property was surrendered to the Mughals by the Chamba chief. Bikramajit established his own *thanas* in the different forts of that area in order to keep order and peace.

Once free from the rebellion of Suraj Mal, Raja Bikramajit now

devoted his full attention to the reduction of Kangra fort. He was now joined by Suraj Mal's brother, Jagat Singh,⁴⁴ in the siege of Kangra fort. After subduing Nurpur and having despatched the whole property of Suraj Mal to the emperor, Bikramajit now turned his attention to the second and the more important task, i.e. the conquest of the fort of Kangra.⁴⁵

Raja Bikramajit, although a devout Hindu, pursued the interest of the emperor with complete devotion. His loyalty, faithfulness and meritorious service won him a *mansab* of 5,000 and the command of the Kangra expedition. The siege was laid and repeated attacks were made on the fort. According to Tabatabai the fort was so well fortified that repeated attacks on the fort and brave fighting on the part of the royal forces only made it possible to come closer to success. Breaches were made in the walls of the fort which made it possible for the Mughal forces to enter the fort and what followed was 'a fight to the finish.'⁴⁶

It appears that the siege lasted for a very long period which led to a complete blockade of the besieged, who, it is said, were starved to surrender.⁴⁷ The fort of Kangra was conquered on 16th November, 1620 A.D. after a siege lasting for over fourteen months. Raja Bikramajit entered the fort triumphantly⁴⁸ at the head of the victorious forces. Military, political and administrative appointments were made. Raja Bikramajit also took possession of the treasury of the Kangra rulers and it was sent to Delhi with a report of victory.⁴⁹

The victorious army and the officers who had displayed praiseworthy actions in this operation, were well rewarded according to their achievements by increments of *mansabs* and other dignities.⁵⁰ Abdul Aziz Khan Naqshbandi was appointed the *faujdar* of Kangra. He was assisted by many other administrators such as Shaikh Faizullah, the son-in-law of late Murtaza Khan, the *subedar* of Punjab and Shaikh Ishaq etc. Raja Rup Chand of Guler, who had rendered very good service in subduing Kangra, was restored to his ancestral estate and half of it was given to him as *jagir*.⁵¹

Jahangir's Visit to Kangra Fort

After the fort of Kangra was conquered emperor Jahangir desired to visit the fort. In January 1622 A.D., while he was going to

Kashmir, he came to Kangra alongwith a few of his attendants. He came by way of Siba and Guler and returned via Nurpur and Pathankot. His visit is still recalled in local tradition. It is said that he was so fascinated by the beauty of Kangra valley that he ordered a palace to be built for himself. The foundation of the proposed palace were actually laid and the site still exists in *mauza* Gargari. The work, however, stalled as probably Kashmir held greater attraction for Jahangir than the valley of Kangra.

Shahjahan and Kangra

After the capture of the Kangra fort by emperor Jahangir in 1620 A.D., the whole territory was annexed to the Mughal empire. The *jagir* was assigned to the defeated ruler of the Kangra house, Raja Hari Chand. The latter, however broke into rebellion and apparently continued a guerrilla war, till he was captured and killed sometime in the year 1627 A.D.

The Guerrilla warfare was continued by Hari Chand's successor, Chander Bhan Chand,⁵² who succeeded in 1627 A.D. The war seems to have continued for quite a long time. Although it was without any success against the Mughals, his gallant deeds still haunt the local people in the form of the ballads sung in his name.⁵³ These ballads, incidently, are the only source of information of Chander Bhan Chand's struggle against the Mughals.

The period of resistance by the Kangra chiefs during the post-Jahangir period, is also termed as a dark period in the history of Kangra. The traditional accounts, preserved in the form of folk songs, refer to the plundering raids of Chander Bhan, which resulted in the despatch of a punitive expedition against the Raja by the Mughals.

The Mughal forces pursued Chander Bhan to the length and breadth of the hills but could not capture him as he retreated deep into the Dhauladhar hills⁵⁴ (known presently as *Chander Bhan Ka Tila*). He continued harassing the imperial forces from his hide out by waging a guerrilla war, till at last he was captured and sent to Delhi as a prisoner.⁵⁵

The traditional accounts suggest that Chander Bhan was not satisfied with the treatment meted out to Raja Hari Chand in granting *jagir* after the annexation of Kangra by the Mughals. There are also conflicting

views whether Chander Bhan was the real successor to Hari Chand or he simply converged with the latter in waging a guerrilla war against the Mughal empire as he was never given the title of *Raja*.⁵⁶

It is, however, clear that whether Chander Bhan was fully invested as chief of the Katoch house or not, his crusade against the Mughal forces represents his bravery and chivalry with which he defied the Mughal authority.⁵⁷ Again, although it is not clear whether Chander Bhan was captured or killed, it can be safely assumed that he ceased to be of any significance after 1660 A.D.⁵⁸

AURANGZEB AND KANGRA

When Aurangzeb occupied the throne in 1658 A.D., Chander Bhan was still continuing with the guerrilla warfare against the Mughals.⁵⁹ It appears that the Rajas of Kangra, after the capture and death of Chander Bhan in 1660 A.d., realised the futility of uneven struggle against the imperial power and had probably reconciled themselves to the status of subordinate *jagirdars* of the Mughals.

Chander Bhan was succeeded by his son Vijay Ram Chand in 1660 A.D. The new ruler was summoned by emperor Aurangzeb and on his refusal to appear at the imperial court, the *Raj Tilak* was conferred on his younger brother, Udai Ram, along with the *jagir* of Rajgir and five other *taluqas* of Nadaun, Palampur, Mahal Sarai, Jai Sukh and Malhar.⁶⁰ During the reign of Udai Ram, the guerrilla warfare had ceased and the Kangra chiefs had quietly settled down as a tributary of the Mughals, whom they obeyed as loyal subjects. After the death of Udai Ram in 1690 A.D., his son Bhim Chand was recognised as his successor by Aurangzeb.

During the reign of Aurangzeb, the fort of Kangra was put under the charge of Sayyid Hussain Ullah Khan, Hasan Abdullah Khan Pathan and Nawab Sayyid Khalil Ullah Khan respectively. 'Their rule', Cunningham remarks, 'was probably marked by the same intolerant bigotry in other places, as in Multan, Mathura, Gwalior and Benaras, where the Hindu temples were destroyed to make way for the mosques.'

Raja Bhim Chand was probably provoked by such intolerance and he rose in protest and leagued with Guru Gobind Singh in order to repel an invasion of his country by the Raja of Jammu and a Mughal chief,

Mian Khan. In this battle, the combined forces of Guru Gobind Singh and Bhim Chand turned out to be victorious.

Subsequently, however, Bhim Chand seems to have followed a pacifying course. In order to gain the favour of the Mughal emperor, he attended his court and in consequence was given the title of *diwan*. After the death of Bhim Chand, his son Alam Chand succeeded to the Kangra throne in 1697. His reign, however, was short lived and he died in 1700 A.D.

Hamir chand,⁶¹ who succeeded Alam Chand, had a fairly long reign extending to over 47 years. He continued the pacifying policy of his father and grand-father. He lived long enough to see the appointment of Nawab Saif Ali Khan, who was destined to be the last Muslim commander of the fort of Kangra.⁶²

Hamir Chand's son and successor, Abhaya Chand ruled only for three years and died childless in 1750 A.D. The succession now fell on Ghamir Chand, the younger brother of Hamir Chand. He ruled only for a year and died in 1751 A.D., leaving behind his eleven sons. They were all unpopular with their officials and subjects. They were therefore, bypassed and Ghamband Chand, a son of Ghamir Chand's younger brother, was seated on the *gaddi* of Kangra.⁶³

The position of the hill Rajas *viz-a-viz* the Mughal emperors may be summed up in the words of Parry:

'Although the (hill) Rajas had to pay tribute and a fee of investiture to the emperor, and were sometimes required to send their sons as hostages to the imperial court, they continued to wage war on each other without restraint, and there was little direct interference in their internal affairs. But when the insubordination of the hill States got out of hand... an expeditionary force would be despatched to bring the recalcitrant Rajas to heel.'⁶⁴

B. Mughals and the Chamba

Prior to the sixteenth century, no evidence is available regarding the Muslim penetration into the state of Chamba. It seems that Chamba enjoyed complete independence during the entire pre-Mughal period.

Even prior to Akbar's invasion of Kangra, there is hardly any evidence of Muslim pressure which may have led to any danger to the freedom of this state. However, after the capture of Kangra fort,⁶⁵ it is believed that Chamba also became tributary to the Mughal empire.

As stated earlier, Akbar deputed his Finance Minister, Raja Todar Mal to create an 'imperial demense in Kangra' by confiscating territories from the various adjoining states of the Kangra group. After annexing a large part of Kangra valley, a similar demand on each of the other states, proportionate to their means, was made by Raja Todar Mal. Chamba was thus compelled to surrender Rihlu and all the territory extending towards the east of that *ilaqa*, which included two other small districts of Chari and Gharoh. From now onwards, Chamba remained subjected to the Mughal authority, and its ruler Pratap Singh Varman, a contemporary of emperor Akbar, continued to remain loyal to the Mughal officer appointed in the hills with his residence at Kangra fort.

Emperor Jahangir

The second phase of the Chamba-Mughal relations began with the rule of Emperor Jahangir. The emperor nursed the ambition of the conquest of Kangra fort⁶⁶ right from the days of his accession. In March, 1615 A.D., the emperor deputed Murtaza Khan, the governor of Punjab, with Suraj Mal, son of Raja Basu of Dhameri-Nurpur, as second in command to reduce the Kangra hills. It was but natural that Suraj Mal disliked the extension of Mughal influence so close to his patrimony. He thwarted his superior and probably intrigued with the enemy.⁶⁷

Suraj Mal Assisted by Chamba Ruler

In 1618 A.D. Suraj Mal of Nurpur rebelled against the Mughals for the reasons stated above. The Mughal commander Murtaza Khan complained to the emperor. Before any action could be initiated against the chief, he fled from Nurpur and took refuge with the ruler of Chamba, Raja Janardan Varman (1613-1623 A.D.). At Chamba Suraj Mal was also joined by his younger brother, Madho Singh. Suraj Mal, meanwhile, sought the intervention of Prince Khurram (Shahjahan) and the latter helped him in convincing Jahangir of his innocence, subject to presenting himself personally at the Mughal court.

Suraj Mal was pardoned when he complied with the imperial

summons and presented himself at the royal court. In October 1618, Suraj Mal further gained the favours of the Prince by joining the latter in Deccan expedition. After the death of Murtaza Khan, Suraj Mal was appointed to command the Kangra expedition⁶⁸ along with another trusted commander, Taqi. Once again he fell out with his associate Taqi and was recalled. Instead of obeying the imperial orders, Suraj Mal revolted and allied himself with the hill chiefs. Raja Bikramajit was now sent to put a check to the aggressive tendencies of Suraj Mal. The latter, being hard pressed by the royal forces, retired to Chamba. The Mughal commander sent an order to the Chamba ruler to surrender the rebel or face the consequences. Meanwhile Suraj Mal fell prey to a fatal disease and died. His host, Janardan Varman, the ruler of Chamba, surrendered unconditionally and also surrendered all the belongings of Suraj Mal, including fourteen elephants and two hundred horses, all of which were handed over to the Mughal State.

After the conquest of the Kangra fort in 1620 A.D., Jahangir visited Kangra in 1622 A.D. There he was awaited by all the hill chiefs, including the Raja of Chamba. Emperor Jahangir makes a special mention of it in his autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* as follows:

'At this stage, the offerings of the raja of Chamba (Janardan Varman) were laid before me. His country is twenty-five *kos* beyond Kangra. The country is the asylum of all the *zamindars* of the country. It has passes difficult to cross. Until now he (the Chamba ruler) had not obeyed any king nor sent offerings. His brother (Bishambar) was also honoured by paying his respects, and on his part performed the duty of service and loyalty. He seems to me to be a reasonable and intelligent urbane. I exalted him with all kinds of patronage and favour.'⁶⁹

An attempt on the part of Nurpur's ruler, Jagat Singh,⁷⁰ led to open hostilities between him and the Chamba ruler. In this war of succession, the Mughal viceroy favoured the cause of Raja Jagat Singh and even sent troops to help him. In a conclusive battle, which was fought at Dhalog (near Dalhousie), the Chamba army was defeated and Bishambar, the Raja's brother, was killed in the battle. After offering a half-hearted resistance, Janardan ultimately fled away. Raja Jagat Singh offered Janardan to present himself at the Mughal court to settle the terms of negotiations and when the latter did so, he was treacherously murdered.⁷¹ This happened sometime in the year 1623 A.D. On Raja

Janardan's death, the state of Chamba became subject to Raja Jagat Singh who ruled over this state for the next two decades.

Rebellion of Jagat Singh : (Chamba and Shahjahan)

During the rule of emperor Jahangir, Raja Jagat Singh enjoyed royal favours. He held a *mansab* of three thousand *zat* and two thousand *sawar*. As mentioned above, in 1623 A.D., he was attached to Prince Khurram (Shahjahan). When Prince Shahjahan revolted against his father, Jahangir, Sadiq Khan, the viceroy of Punjab was ordered to suppress the revolt. Madho Singh, the younger brother of Jagat Singh, was honoured with the title of 'Raja' and despatched towards Kangra hills to assist in the operations against the hill chiefs. Jagat Singh also revolted and fortified Maukot. He was, however, forced to surrender and was pardoned, through the intervention of Nur Jahan Begum.⁷²

When Shahjahan ascended the throne in 1627, the Pathania chief Jagat Singh was confirmed in his *mansab*. In 1634 he was appointed the *thanedar* of Bangash, in Kurram valley and Kohat to tackle the rebels there. After three years he was attached to the *suba* of Kabul. After a year he returned to Lahore. There he was received with honour by the emperor and was again appointed as the *faujdar* of Bangash.

Jagat Singh revolts against Shahjahan

All the imperial favours however, did not satisfy Raja Jagat Singh who was too keen to hold his sway over the entire Kangra hills. During his absence at the court, his state was looked after by his son, Rajrup Singh, who had also secured for himself the *faujdari* of Kangra. He, however, failed to discharge his duties properly and raised a standard of revolt against the Mughal government in connivance with his father, Jagat Singh.

Raja Jagat Singh, without disclosing his secret ambition with his son, pretended to the emperor that he would suppress the revolt in case he was confirmed as *faujdar* of Kangra. In return he promised to pay an annual tribute of rupees four lacs to the Mughal emperor. The request of Jagat Singh was acceded to but on his return to the hills, he broke out into open rebellion.

Emperor Shahjahan, on learning about the revolt of Raja Jagat Singh, despatched a large army under the command of Prince Murad Baksh in 1641 A.D. Meanwhile, Jagat Singh's son Prithvi Singh rushed to the Rajas of Mandi and Suket to seek their help in restoration to the Chamba throne. With enforcements from the Raja of Mandi, he crossed Rohtang and entered Lahul and then to Pangi via the Chini Pass. He was successful in capturing his capital. On the approach of the Mughal forces, however, he presented himself in the Mughal camp at Pathankot early in December, 1641. He was sent to the royal court, probably then in Lahore, to confirm his allegiance to emperor Shahjahan.⁷³

On his part, Jagat Singh prepared to defend himself against the approaching Mughal forces, although outwardly he showed allegiance and obedience. When Prince Murad arrived at Pathankot, he was joined by Sayyed Khan Bahadur and Asalat Khan. Jagat Singh had strongly fortified the three principal fortresses of Maukot, Nurpur and Taragarh located within his territory. Giving the details of the siege of Taragarh fort, the author of *Badshahnama*⁷⁴ writes:

'On the fifth Shawwal (27th December, 1641 A.D.), the Prince, along with Khan-i-Jahan and other officers, reached Nurpur and encamped there. He sent orders to Sayyed Khan and his sons to Jammu and Bahadur Khan and Asalat Khan, with nearly twelve thousand men, to lay siege to Taragarh. He also ordered Raja Man Singh (of Guler), the mortal enemy of Jagat Singh and to take up a position at the back of Taragarh.'

From the account given in the *Badshahnama*, it appears that Prithvi Singh⁷⁵ was also present during the siege of Maukot and Nurpur, which preceded the siege of Taragarh. Jagat Singh planned to defend the fortress of Maukot in the first instance, which was a fortified enclosure with dense forests around it. The fort of Nurpur, on the other hand was being supervised by his officers. The Mughals on their part laid siege to both Maukot and Nurpur simultaneously. This made the position of Jagat Singh untenable and he was obliged to abandon Maukot and made his way to Taragarh.

About the involvement of Prithvi Chand in the siege of Taragarh, Lahori writes: 'Prithvi Chand, the zamindar of Champa, was honoured with a khilat, an inlaid dagger, the title (*mansab*) of commander of one thousand, and the actual command of four hundred horsemen, the

title of Raja and a horse.... As the mountain on which Jagat Singh had laid the foundations of the fort of Taragarh was in Champa, and had been taken by the Raja with violence, and as the back of the fort joined on the above mentioned territory, the possession of which was essential to the taking of the fort, he (Prithvi Chand) was ordered to go home that he might make the necessary preparations to deliver an attack with a proper force from the back of the fort, and capturing the eminence, reduced the besieged to straitened circum-stances.⁷⁶

The siege of Taragarh lasted for about two months and in March, 1642 A.D., Jagat Singh, finding himself helpless, sued for peace. Accordingly, he surrendered himself to the clemency of the emperor along with his men. After his submission, Jagat Singh was not only pardoned but was also restored to his former honours. The fort of Taragarh, however, was garrisoned with the Mughal troops.⁷⁷

It appears that under the royal orders, the outer fortifications of the Taragarh fort were demolished and only the buildings used for the residence of Jagat Singh's family were spared. Khan-i-Jahan came to the Prince along with Jagat Singh on March 11, 1642 A.D. The remaining period of Jagat Singh's life was spent in service of the emperor.⁷⁸ The kingdom of Chamba was restored to Prithvi Singh.

Shahjahan Restores Chamba to Prithvi Singh

After being restored to his kingdom, Prithvi Singh set himself to the task of consolidation and expansion of his State. It is stated that Prithvi Singh maintained very cordial relations with emperor Shahjahan during whose reign, he visited Delhi at least nine times. He was granted the *jagir* of Jaswan which remained attached to the State permanently, apart from the valuable presents he received from the emperor during his visits to Delhi.⁷⁹ In his dispute with the Basohli chief Sangram Pal, regarding his claim over Bhalai, the Chamba chief was favoured and the dispute was settled in his favour in 1648 A.D.⁸⁰

Raja Chatar Singh, who succeeded Prithvi Singh over the throne of Chamba, was a contemporary of emperor Aurangzeb. In 1678 A.D., when Aurangzeb issued an ordinance in connection with the demolition of all the Hindu temples in the native states, Chatar Singh refused to obey the royal order and instead directed that a gilt pinnacle be put on each of

the temples in Chamba as a mark of defiance of the Mughal authority.⁸¹

Raja Chatar Singh is also reported to have formed a confederacy of the hill chiefs (of Guler, Basohli and Jammu) to counter the incursion of Mirza Obed Beg, the viceroy of the Punjab into the hills. The Mughal viceroy was defeated by the confederate forces and the hill chiefs were able to recover their lost territories.

Like Kangra, although the Chamba rulers remained tributary to the Mughals since the period of emperor Akbar, yet the imperial authority was never tight on them. On the whole, the Chamba chiefs received generous treatment from the Mughal rulers. The chiefs, however, had to acknowledge Mughal suzerainty by regular payment of *nazrana* or *peshkash*.

Sirmur and the Mughals

As in case of Chamba and Kangra, the Mughal suzerainty also extended to Sirmur kingdom where its rulers Raja Dharam Parkash (1538-1570); Raja Dip Parkash (1570-1585); Raja Bakhat Parkash (1585-1605) and Raja Budhi Parkash (1605-1615) are stated to have remained loyal to the Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir.

It was during the reign of Raja Karam Parkash (1616-1630) that the new capital of Nahan was founded in 1621 A.D. and the seat of government was changed from Kalsi to Nahan. The next chief Mandhata Parkash was a contemporary of emperor Shahjahan. The Sirmur chief not only remained loyal to the emperor but even assisted the Mughal forces in the various expeditions against the neighbouring Garhwal chiefs.⁸² As a reward for his services, the Sirmur chief was restored many of his old territories near the 'Doon Kohistan'.⁸³

During the period of emperor Aurangzeb, the Sirmur chief Raja Subhag Parkash (1647-1659) was directed by the emperor to intercept all correspondence passing through the state between Sulaiman Shukoh, then at Srinagar, and his father Dara Shukoh.⁸⁴ Through another *firman*, the Raja is directed to co-operate with the imperial forces⁸⁵ (under Raja Raj Rup, the Raja of Nurpur and son of Raja Jagat Singh) in their attack on Srinagar Garhwal. The Sirmur chief was also conferred several territories, in addition to his own, as a reward for his services to the Mughals.⁸⁶

After the death of Subhag Parkash, his son Budh (Bidhi) Chand was confirmed over the Sirmur *gaddi*, through a *firman* dated 1078 A.H. issued by emperor Aurangzeb,⁸⁷ who recognised his succession in 1659 A.D. Similarly, his successor Medini Parkash, was also granted a *khillat* and recognised as Sirmur chief in 1678 A.D., through a *firman* dated 20th *Rabi*, A.H. 1109 issued by emperor Aurangzeb. It was during the rule of Medini Parkash that Guru Gobind Singh was invited to Sirmur and the latter founded Paonta Sahib in the Kayadra Dun.⁸⁸

From various other imperial *firmans*, issued from time to time, it seems certain that the Mughal domination over Sirmur continued till the death of emperor Aurangzeb and the State remained dependent on the Mughal court to check the encroachments on its territory by the adjoining Srinagar (Garhwal) rulers.⁸⁹

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- (1) Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, tr. H.S. Beveridge,(Delhi, 1973), Vol.. II, p. 35.
 - (2) Abul Fazl refers to Raja Bakht Mal as a *zamindar* of Mau. During the Lodi period, he owed allegiance to the Lodi rulers but when Humayun fled in 1540 and Sher Shah ascended the throne of Delhi, he transferred his allegiance to the new power. He supported Sikandar Shah Sur in his struggle against the Mughals. Abul Fazl, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 63
 - (3) The fortress of Maukot stood on the summit of the Mau range of low hills running parallel to the Chakki and the east of that river, about half-way between Pathankot and Nurpur. It was built by Salim Shah Sur. It figures prominently in the Mughal histories till the time of emperor Shahjahan, who completely demolished the fort. Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, p. 254.
 - (4) Sikandar Shah Sur was assigned the districts of Bihar and Kharid in the form of *jagir*. He, however, died two years later.
Abul Fazl, op.cit., Vol. II, p.91: Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, tr. Vol. II, p.35
 - (5) He is wrongly named as Ram Chand by Nizamuddin and Badauni. Nizamuddin, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. V, p.248; Badauni, *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh*, vol. II, p.4. Ram Chand was in fact the father of Dharam Chand.
 - (6) From *Dharam Chand Natak*, it appears that the relations between Kangra rulers and the empor Akbar were quite cordial and that the Kangra ruler also used to send Kangra troops to help the royal army in various campaigns. G.C. Barnes, *Kangra Settlement Report*, Lahore, 1855.
 - (7) According to Guler accounts, Jai Chand was arrested by Raja Ram Chand of Guler and sent to Delhi, where he was put in confinement. Hutchison and Vogel, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 145.
- Jaswan was the chieftaincy of the Jaswal Clan. According to local legends, the

ruling family of Jaswan was a branch of the Katoch family of Kangra from which it separated about 1170 A.D. under Purab Chand. Akbar's contemporary at Jaswan was Raja Gopi Chand who supported Bidhi Chand against the Mughals but on submission of the latter, Gopi Chand also submitted to the Mughal commander, Hussain Quli Khan. G.C. Barnes, *op.cit.*, Vol.I., p.208.

- (8) Nizamuddin Ahmad, *op. cit.*, Vol. V., p.356.
- (9) Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*. tr. H.S. Beveridge *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p.51.
- (10) Nizamuddin Ahmad, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p.357
- (11) The fortress of Kotla belonged to Guler State, an off-shoot of Kangra. In addition to the main fort of Guler, the state also possessed six other forts, of which Kotla was the most important. Hutchison and Vogel, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.199
- (12) Nizamuddin Ahmad, *op. cit.*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, pp.357-58.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p. 358.
- (14) According to Abul Fazl 'Hussain Quli Khan was averse to raising the siege as the reduction of fort was at hand. The distress of the besieging army, however, threw its weight against Hussain, who was compelled by sheer force of circumstances to give away.' Abul Fazl, *op. cit.*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. III, p. 52.
- (15) Abul Fazl, *op.cit.*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. III, pp. 52-53. Nizamuddin Ahmad states, 'As a result of this campaign to Nagarkot, Hussain Quli Khan realised as *peshkash*, among other things, five mans of gold (*tila*), which amounted to one year's income from the temple.' Nizamuddin Ahmad, *op.cit.*, tr. Elliot and dowson, Vol. V., p. 359.
- (16) Nizamuddin further informs that a mosque was also raised in the fort, Friday, *khurba* was read in the name of the emperor and coins were struck. Nizamuddin Ahmad, *op.cit.*, Vol.v., p. 359.
- (17) G.C. Barnes, *Kangra Settlement Report of 1889*, p. 8 That Raja Todar Mal was quite successful in his mission is known from the fact that he reported to the emperor by using the metaphor that he had 'cut off the meat and left the bone.' i.e. he has annexed the fertile tracts and left only the bare hills for the hill chiefs.
- (18) *Ibid.* For further details see Amar Singh, *Socio-economic conditions of the people of Kangra, 1846-1947*, H.P. University, M.Phil (History) Dissertation, 1984 (unpublished).
- (19) Abul Fazl, *op.cit.*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. III, p. 880. some of the Rajas were: Raja Bidhi Chand of Nagarkot, Rai Partap of Maukot, Raja Parasram of Jammu, Raja Basu of Mau and Rai Balbadar of Lakhnupur. Hutchison and Vogel add that 'Although Chamba, Kulu, Mandi and Suket are not mentioned in the list, we may surmise that all the hill states between the Chenab and the Sutlej were in revolt.' Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, p. 150; *Maasir-ul-Umarah* by Shah Nawaz Khan, (ed.) Maulavi Abdur Rahim (Calcutta, 1888), Vol. II, p. 160.

- (20) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 150.
- (21) Jasrota was founded by Karan Dev, the brother of Manak Dev, the founder of Mankot. There is no reference about the Jasrota chiefs prior to the reign of Akbar.
- (22) Faizi Sirhindī, *Akbarnama*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p.126.
- (23) *Ibid* .pp. 127-28.
- (24) *Ibid.*, pp. 126-29. Possibly Raja Bidhi Chand was also at the Mughal Court during this period. Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, I, p.151.
- (25) Shaikh Farid afterwards received the title of Murtaza Khan for his services in bringing successful submission of the Kangra rulers and reduction of Kangra fort in 1615 A.D. For details see *Kangra under Jahangir Supra*, pp. 112-16. For biographical sketch of Shaikh Farid see Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr.H. Beveridge, Vol.I, (Delhi reprint), pp. 525-26.
- (26) Abul Fazl, *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 1060.
- (27) Abul Fazl has inadvertently named Maluk Chand as the Raja of Kangra during the reign of Akbar. The Raja of Kangra was in fact Bidhi Chand.
- (28) Abul Fazl, *op.cit.*, tr. Henry Beveridge, Vol.III, p 1108.
- (29) For details concerning the wavering attitude of the Kangra chiefs, Dharam Chaqnd, Jai Chand and Tilok chand during the rule of Emperor Akbar see A.R. Khan, *Chieftains in the Mughal empire during the reign of Akbar*, (Simla, 1977), pp. 40-42.

According to Shahnawaz Khan, 'Akbar, with all his appetite for conquest, and length of reign, did not succeed in taking Kangra, though the country adjoined his dominions.' Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. Henry Beveridge, Vol. I, (Delhi reprint), p. 414.

- (30) Emperor Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, tr. Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. II, p. 184.
- (31) He was the same Farid who had conducted the Kangra campaign earlier in 1594-95 A.D. See account under Akbar.
- (32) Raja Suraj Mal had succeeded his father Raja Basu in 1613 A.D. with the permission of emperor Jahangir. He held a *mansab* of 2,000 and the title of Raja. On being deputed to the Kangra campaign, his *mansab* was raised by 500.
- (33) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 301.
- (34) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 361-62.
- (35) For biographical details about Suraj Mal, son of Raja Basu see Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol.I, Delhi reprint, pp. 394,413,415,726.
- (36) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, p 392.
- (37) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 56.

- (38) It was under the able generalship of Raja Bikramaji that the Mughal army succeeded in capturing the fort of Kangra. He was an old, brave and experienced chief and was very faithful to the throne. Jalal Tabatabai, *Shash Fateh-i-Kangra*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, Appendix, p. 521; Shahnawaz Khan; *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. Beveridge, Vol. I, pp. 413-19.
- (39) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 73
- (40) *Ibid.*, p. 74
- (41) Tabatabai, *op.cit.*, tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 521.
- (42) *Ibid.*, p. 522; Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. Vol. I, p. 413.
- (43) For further details see account under the title, *Chamba and the Mughals*.
- (44) After the death of Suraj Mal, Jagat Singh had been favoured by Jahangir with a small *mansab* and was passing his days in Bengal. He was sent for by the king. His small *mansab* of 300 horses was increased to 1,000 personal and 500 horses and he was ordered to accompany Bikramjit for the conquest of Kangra.
- (45) Tabatabai *op.cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 524.
- (46) *Ibid.*
- (47) Tabatabai writes, 'The warriors fought so boldly that they rivalled the celebrated Sam and Nauman in feats of chivalry and the musketeers threw such a shower of balls that the heavens appeared to have hid themselves under the veil of clouds.' *Ibid.*, pp. 524-25.
- (48) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 185. For biographical sketch of Raja Bikramajit (*Rai Rayan*) see Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. I, (Delhi reprint), pp. 412-419.
- (49) Tabatabai, *op.cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 525
Jahangir mentions in his memoirs, 'On this day (5th Muharram A.H. 1029/20th November, 1620 A.D.) the joy enhancing news of the conquest of the fort of Kangra rejoiced our mind.'
- Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. II, p. 185.
- (50) Abdul Aziz Khan Naqshbandi, who had been sent to help Bikramajit, was made the *faujdar* of Kangra and his *mansab* was increased to 2,000 personnel and 1,000 horses. Shaikh Faizullah, the son-in-law of Murtaza Khan, the late *subedar* of Punjab, also accompanied him. Ishaq was also sent to Kangra.
- (51) Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 187
- (52) Chander Bhan Chand was the son of Kalyan Chand, who was the younger brother of Raja Dharam Chand of Kangra.
- (53) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 172.
- (54) The lofty hill (9,000 feet high) on the outskirts of the Dhauladhar is halfway

between Dharamsala and Palampur and is still known as '*Chander Bhan Ka Tila*.' Hutchinson and Vogel, *op.cit.*, I, p. 172.

- (55) On the basis of the *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, Hutchinson and Vogel conclude that Chander Bhan was present in the Kangra fort at the time of its siege by the Mughals. He, however, managed to escape and continued guerrilla war. Finally the emperor was impressed upon by the regional chief to bring Chander Bhan to submission by granting him a *jagir*. The latter was, however, killed at the siege of Maukot in 1641 A.D. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-73.
- (56) In all the documents Chander Bhan is referred to as *Mian* and not with the title of *Raja*. It may thus appear that he was not a fully invested chief of the Katoch house in power for many years.
- (57) It is, however, not clear if he was next in succession after Hari Chand, though he probably was. But in any case his brave struggle for the independence of his country secured the devoted attachment of his countrymen, who even in the present times hold his name in great remembrance.
- (58) According to one version Chander Bhan was killed during the siege of Maukot in 1641 A.D. and according to another he was finally captured in the reign of Aurangzeb, possibly around 1668 A.D. Hutchinson and Vogel, *op.cit.*, I, p.173.
- (59) He is finally said to have been captured by Aurangzeb's troops in 1660 A.D. and put to death. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- (60) It appears that not until 1687 A.D., when Vijay Ram Chand died, did Udai Ram come to the throne. Vijay Ram founded the town of Vijaipur which continued to be the residence of the Kangra chiefs till the days of Rāja Ghamand Chand.
- (61) He built a small fort at a place now called Hamirpur, after his name. His father Alam Chand also founded a city called Alampur, after his name. It is a small town near Sujanpur Tira.
- (62) For reference to Nawab Saif Ali Khan, the last governor of Kangra see Document No. IV, p. 59 in *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba. Saif Ali Khan became governor of Kangra in 1743 and died probably in 1783 when the fort was being besieged by the Sikhs under Jai Singh Kanhaiya.
- (63) Near Tira, i.e. the fort palace, Ghamand Chand founded the town of Sujanpur, which became famous by the twin name of Tira-Sujanpur.
- (64) Jonathan P. Parry, *Caste and Kinship in Kangra*, (London, 1979), p.12.
- (65) For details see chapter on *Kangra and the Mughals*.
- (66) *Ibid.* For a detailed study of Chamba's relations with the Mughals see H.S. Katoch, *Relations between the Chamba State and the Mughals*, H.P. University, M.Phil (History) dissertation, 1979, (unpublished).
- (67) M.S. Ahluwalia and others *op.cit.*, p.74

- (68) For further details see account under *Emperor Jahangir and Kangra*.
- (69) Emperor Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, tr. Alexander Rogers and Henry Beveridge, (Delhi reprint, 1968), Vol. II, p. 223.
- (70) For a biographical sketch of Raja Jagat Singh, son of Raja Basu, see Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. I, (Delhi reprint), pp. 727-27.
- (71) Emperor Jahangir, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 75
- (72) Subsequent events indicate that Raja Rup Chand of Guler (1610-35 A.D.) was ordered to suppress the rebellion of Jagat Singh. See Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. II p. 75! Three years afterwards, Raja Jagat Singh was again in revolt but was forgiven as we notice that he continued to enjoy his *mansab* till the accession of Shahjahan. For details about Jagat Singh's rebellion see also Gharib Khan, *Mukhtasar Tawarikh Riyasat Chamba*, (Chamba, 1933), Urdu, pp. 42-44.
- (73) For details see Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, p. 304. See also Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. I, (Delhi reprint), pp. 726-27.
- (74) Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Badshahnama*. According to B.P. Saxena, the siege of Taragarh began in January, 1642 A.D. B.P. Saxena, *History of Shahjahan of Dihli*, (Allahabad, 1962), pp. 102-103.
- (75) According to Lahori, 'On 23rd Ramzan (16th December, 1641 A.D.), the high born prince (Murad Baksh), in accordance with the sublime orders, sent Prithvi Chand, the *zamindar* of Champa, whose father had been killed by the outcaste Jagat Singh, and who was at this time enrolled among the royal servants...' Abdul Hamid Lahori *Badshahnama*, tr. Elliot vol.viii, p.69. See also Shahnawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umarah*, tr. Vol. I, p. 726. See also Gharib Khan, *op.cit.*, p. 41.
- (76) Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Badshahnama*, vol vii, p69
- (77) Gharib Khan, *op.cit.*, p. 40, for details regarding the foundation of the fort of Taragarh.
- (78) Jagat Singh died in January 1646 at Peshawar. This rebellion forms an exact parallel to that of the Bundelas. The forcible occupation of Chauragarh by Jujhar Singh may be compared to Jagat Singh's encroachment on the Chamba state; the treacherous murder of Prem Narayan is identical with the murder of Prithvi Chand's father almost in similar circumstances. B.P. Saxena, *op.cit.*, pp. 101-102. For an analysis of the circumstances leading to the rebellion of Jagat Singh against the Mughal government, see Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 112-13.
- (79) In the *toshakhana* of Prithvi Singh, there existed valuable presents, especially inlaid daggers, and a jewelled *sirpaich* with a large sapphire in it, which were received by Prithvi Singh from time to time from the Mughal emperor. During one of his visits to Delhi he also got back the family idol of Chamba Rajas, called Raghbir, which was being used as a weight in the Mughal palace. Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, I, p. 307.
- (80) The *sanad* dated *Safar A.H. 1058* (5th March, 648 A.D.) in Persian regarding declaration of Bhalai *pargana* as belonging to Raja Prithvi Singh of Chamba, is preserved in the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba.

- (81) For a document dated 22nd *Ramzan*, A.H.1076/18th March, 1666 A.D. see *Catalogue Bhuri singh Museum*, Chamba, C.4. The document is issued under the seal of Mir Khan, an officer of Emperor Aurangzeb to Raja Chatar Singh of Chamba (1664-90 A.D.). It seems that the dispute over *Pargana Bhalai* with the State of Basohli still existed, as the letter directs Sangram Pal to make over the *Pargana* of Bhalai to Chamba.
- (82) In one of the *firmans*, dated 18th *Jamadi-us-Sani*, A.H. 1064, issued by emperor Shahjahan, Raja Mandhata Parkash of Sirmur is addressed as:
 'Mateh-al Islam Raja Mandhata Parkash ba inayat badshahana umeedwar...' For full text of the *firman* see Ranzor Singh, *Tarikh Riyasat Sirmur* (Allahabad, 1912), Appendix, page.1. The Sirmur chief is directed in the said *firman* to supply 2,000 troops to Nijabat Khan, the *faujdar* of the country at the foot of the Kangra hills for Srinagar (Garhwal) expedition.
- (83) See also *Ibid.*, Appendix, pp.3-6 for another *firman* of emperor Shahjahan, dated 24th *Muharram*, A.H. 1065, to Raja Mandhata Parkash, wherein the latter is directed to help Khalillullah Khan with 10,000 troops for the conquest of Garhwal.
- (84) *Firman* dated 19th *Jamadi-ul-Awwal*, A.H. 1049 from emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir to Raja Subhag Parkash, sent through Muhammad Sultan Bahadur, For text see *Ibid.*, Appendix, No. 6, pp. 11-14; No. 7, pp. 14-17.
- (85) *Firman* dated 16th *Muharram*, A.H. I Regnal Year, issued by emperor Aurangzeb to Raja Subhag Parkash. For text see Ranzor Singh, *op.cit.*, Appendix, No. 8, pp. 17-20.
- (86) See for example *firman* dated 7th *Zil-Hijjah*, 3rd R.Y., issued by emperor Aurangzeb, through which the *ilaqa* of Kalankhar (near Dehradun) is conferred upon Raja Subhag Parkash. *Ibid.*, Appendix, No. 9, pp. 20-22.
- (87) Ranzor Singh, *op.cit.*, Appendix, No. 10, pp. 22-23.
- (88) For details see chapter V, *Himachal and the Sikhs*.
- (89) Ranzor Singh, *op.cit.*, Appendix, Nos. 11,12 and 13, pp. 23-28.

CHAPTER - V

HIMACHAL AND THE SIKHS

THE SIKH GURUS AND HIMACHAL

MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH AND KANGRA HILLS

CHAPTER - V

HIMACHAL AND THE SIKHS

A. THE SIKH GURUS AND HIMACHAL

INTRODUCTION

The rise and the development of the Sikh religion and subsequently the establishment of the Sikh rule in the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, had a deep impact on the history of the Himachal Pradesh as well as the Rajas of the erstwhile Hill States in the region.

During the fifteenth century, a new element was introduced in the political and religious conditions of Punjab and that was the rise of the Sikhs. The Sikhs were a new sect founded by Guru Nanak during the reign of the first Mughal emperor, Babur. It is also known as a tale of two dynasties. There can hardly be found a better example of the rise of a community of oppressed, depressed and disorganised people, who proved themselves to be equal to the occasion and have left indelible marks on the course of the Indian history.

The advent of Guru Nanak (1469) served as a socio-political necessity. The Guru was especially opposed to the polytheism of the Hindus, their caste system and the domination of the Brahmins. For Guru Nanak no country was foreign and no people were alien. That is why he travelled far and wide with a view to enlighten the humanity as a whole and to deliver to them his message of love, peace, devotion to God, social-justice, religious tolerance and universal brotherhood of man.

To deliver his message of peace, good-will and brotherhood,

Guru Nanak also toured the Himalayan region as far as Ladakh. This is corroborated by his third journey (*udasi*). Writers are not unanimous about the exact period of Guru's journey to the north. The Guru, however, is recorded to have visited the mountain states including Jwala Mukhi, Kangra, Kulu, Lahul, Spiti, Tibet, China, Garhwal and Sirmur, where he held debates with the disciples of Yogis, Gorakhnath and Machandernath and clarified the religious issues raised by them.¹

According to modern researches² during the Guru's third journey, the first state visited by him in 1514 was Himachal Pradesh. It is stated that after passing through Gurdaspur and Pathankot in the Punjab, the Guru entered the Kangra hills. He visited the Mahamaya temple. From Kangra the Guru went to Chamba via Dharamsala, which was famous for its old Shri Lakshmi Narayan temple. It is also possible that he visited Brahmaur and the sacred Mani Mahesh lake. The Guru returned to Kangra from Chamba and visited the old temple of Jwala Mukhi.³

From Jwala Mukhi, Guru Nanak entered Kulu valley and visited Triloknath and afterwards proceeded to Mani Karan. A Sikh temple now exists near the place which is also famous for its hot springs. From here he came to Mandi and Suket and afterwards to Rawalsar. From Rawalsar, the Guru returned to Mandi and through Bilaspur, reached Kiratpur. The Guru also visited Pinjor and Joharsar *tirath* near Sabathu where a Gurdwara commemorates the visit. It is also probable that the Guru also visited Bushahr which is mentioned as Bisiar Desh in Sikh accounts.⁴

According to the account given in these second *udasi*, which almost corroborates the above account, the Guru started from Sultanpur and passing through the areas of Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur, reached Kiratpur. Entering the hilly region at Kiratpur, the Guru proceeded to Bilaspur and then reached Mandi via Suket. At a distance of ten miles from Mandi is the famous *khund* (tank) of Skand Dhara called Rawalsar. The Guru went there and after that proceeded to Jwalaji. After seeing the ever bright flame (*jyoti*) there, he travelled on to Kangra via Nadaun. From there he proceeded to Baijnath which was then called Kirgram. Kir was the name of the tribe which had at one time established its ascendancy over that area.

From Baijnath the route led through Dulchi Pass to Kulu. While

on his way to Kulu, Guru Nanak paid a visit to Mani Karan. One of the local legends says that the hot springs on which now depends the whole domestic economy of the people of the place, were brought into existence by Guru Nanak's blessings.

From Kulu, a route led into the Spiti territory through the Hamtu Pass. Guru Nanak took this route and entered the valley of Spiti. There is an old village called Mulana. The Guru stayed there for some time, a fact which is confirmed by a strong local tradition. Some sacred possessions of the Guru are reported to be preserved and worshipped by the people of the village. Passing through the Shipki Pass, the Guru was able to enter Tibet and then proceeded along the Sutlej river to the Mansrover lake and the Kailash Parbat.⁵

The visit of Guru Nanak to Kangra is further corroborated by the *Adi Granth* which mentions that Lehna became first acquainted with Nanak at Kangra, when he had gone to worship the Devi.⁶ None of the Sikhs had such faith and confidence in Guru Nanak as Lehna had and it was, therefore, that in preference to his own sons, Guru Nanak appointed him 'Guru' and named him 'Angad' i.e. the flesh of his flesh and the bone of his bone.

The fifth Guru, Arjun Dev (1563-1645 A.D.) wanted to complete the building of Harimander Sahib at Amritsar. One day, while sitting in his court, he said that in order to complete the work (of Harimander and the tank) more funds were required and suggested to his Sikhs to endeavour to obtain it from the hill chiefs. For this Bhai Kaliana proceeded to Mandi State in the hills. The Raja went with his queen and army to visit Amritsar. There the Raja met the Guru.⁷

The sixth Guru, Hargobind (1595-1645 A.D.) like Guru Nanak travelled the country up and down. On his way back to Amritsar, he accepted from the Raja of Kahlur (Bilaspur) a gift of a plot of land lying between the foothills of the Himalayas and river Sutlej. Modern researches also confirm the gift from the Raja of Kahlur received by the Guru.⁸

On the new site the Guru built a town which was named Kiratpur sometime in 1634 A.D. and also shifted his head-quarters there in the Himachal foothills. The remaining years of his life were spent in this

retreat. It is also said that in 1642 A.D., the Guru joined forces with Tara Chand of Kahlur and helped him to defeat the *nawab* of Ropar.⁹ Guru Hargobind is said to have converted the Raja of Kangra and Piliphbit to the Sikh faith. From Kiratpur he tried to influence the hill tracts. In this connection, Mohsin Fani narrates the following incidence:

'The inhabitants of the country of Raja Tara Chand of Kahlur worshipped idols and on one of the summit of a mountain, they had created the image of Narayana, where rajas and other eminent persons made pilgrimages. When Guru Hargobind went to that place, a Sikh named Bhairo, entered the temple and struck off the nose of the idol. The Raja complained to the Guru but Bhairo denied the charge. The servants of the Raja, however, declared that they positively knew the man. Bhairo replied, 'O Raja ask the God, if he tells my name, kill me'. The Raja said, "You block-head; how shall the God speak." Bhairo laughed and answered if God can not defend his head nor can he point out the man who had struck him, what benefit did they expect from him, and why do they venerate his strength? Bhairo's answer is said to have had a tremendous influence on the Raja and his followers.¹⁰

Mohsin Fani further reports that from this time onwards, the disciples of Guru Hargobind increased considerably in the hills. The same author further informs that when the Guru died, a large number of them volunteered to burn themselves on his funeral pyre.¹¹ The impact of Sikhism in the Kangra hills, however, seems to be a temporary phase, and the relationship gradually changed as the subsequent developments indicate.

After Guru Hargobind, his grandson, Guru Har Rai (1645-1661 A.D.) succeeded to Guruship. Within one year of his assuming Guruship, he was compelled to leave Kiratpur with his family and retainers. Raja Tara Chand of Kahlur, in whose territory Kiratpur was situated, was having trouble with the Mughal emperor, Shahjahan. Guru Har Rai feared that in the operation against the Raja, the Mughal governor Najabat Khan may turn on the Sikhs as well. Then the Guru betook himself to Thapal (probably Taksal) situated within the territory of Raja Karam Parkash of Sirmur. He lived there for thirteen years.¹²

It appears that the Sikh Gurus and their other associates were having cordial relations with the hill chiefs of Kahlur State at least till the

period of Guru Gobind Singh. There is a reference in the *Shashi Bans Binod*¹³ about the cordial reception extended to Guru Ram Rai by the contemporary Kahlur chief, Raja Deep Chand.

Raja Deep Chand was a devoted follower of Guru Hargobind and his children also maintained close relations with the succeeding Gurus. The ninth Guru, Teg Bahadur, on the invitation of the Rani of Kahlur, participated in the ceremonies connected with the demise of the prince and offered his condolences to the Rani. Before leaving Kahlur, the Guru expressed his desire to set up his home somewhere in the hills. The Rani was too pleased with the thought and offered him the gift of three villages. It is claimed that the Guru politely refused to accept the land as a gift and finally paid cash for the purchase of some land.¹⁴

Guru Gobind Singh and the Hill States of Himachal

We have already discussed how Sikhism founded by Guru Nanak, developed under its successors, mainly under the tenth and the last Guru, Gobind Singh. The Guru was born at Patna in Bihar in 1666 A.D. He was only nine years old when his father's severed head was brought to Anandpur (founded by Guru Teg Bahadur in the foothills of Shiwaliks) for cremation. The question of safety arose among the party member who gave this responsibility to Gobind Rai.

As a measure of safety, the centre of their preaching was shifted from Anandpur further into the mountains at Paonta.¹⁵ As the Guru grew to manhood, he made it publicly known that he would welcome offerings in arms and horses, and more than the offerings, he would welcome able bodied men willing to join in his crusade against the Mughals. His appeal, as the subsequent events point out, met with a ready response. However, the activities of the Guru were misunderstood by the hill Rajas, particularly by the Rajas of Kahlur (Bilaspur) and Hindur (Nalagarh).

Guru Gobind Singh and Kahlur State

The relationship between the tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh and the hill chiefs of Kahlur and Sirmur, forms an interesting chapter in the annals of Sikh history. The relationship is known on the basis of two battles of Bhangani and Nadaun. In 1688 A.D., the Guru was back at Makhowal, Anandpur. However during his absence, Raja Bhim Chand,

who had succeeded Raja Deep Chand, improved his position in the hill politics considerably. Being the head of an important state till 1685 A.D., he also desired to be acknowledged as a military commander.

According to the *Tawarikh Gur Khalsa*¹⁶ and other Sikh traditional accounts, during the reign of Raja Bhim Chand, the Guru visited the Sirmur State. A rift cropped up between the Guru and Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur on account of a white elephant, which was gifted to the Guru by Raja Man Singh of Assam. Raja Bhim Chand demanded the elephant which was refused. The Raja being annoyed, banished Guru Gobind Singh from his territory. Thereupon the Guru left Anandpur and encamped in village Mirpur, at Nahan. It was during his stay at Nahan territory that the Guru was invited by its Raja, Medini Parkash, with a request to settle down near Nahan. From Nahan, the Guru migrated to what is now known as Paonta Sahib.¹⁷

Like his grand-father Hargobind, the Guru made it known that he would welcome offerings in arms and horses and more than that he would welcome able-bodied men to join his crusade¹⁸ which was directed against the Mughal tyranny. The Guru's trouble, however, came from an unexpected quarter. He had been encouraged by the Rajput chieftains of the Himachal hills to believe that they would support him against the Mughals. But as soon as he started organising his army, Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur (in whose territory Anandpur was located) turned hostile and successfully influenced the chiefs of several neighbouring hill states to help him in expelling the Guru from their midst. Perhaps they saw the Guru's growing power in the hills as a danger to their own domination in the hills.

On the occasion of the betrothal ceremony of Raja Bhim Chand's son (with the daughter of Raja Fateh Shah of Garhwal), the Kahlur chief sent his officers to Guru Gobind Singh to borrow the white elephant for the occasion. The Guru thought that the Raja wanted to take the elephant for him and therefore, refused to part with it. This caused bitterness in Bhim Chand's mind and he determined to take revenge. The relations became so strained that at last both resolved to take to arms. It was decided by the hill Rajas that the question should be finally settled as soon as the marriage was over. Meanwhile the invitation was received from Raja Medini Parkash of Sirmur to settle in his territory.¹⁹ With the permission of the Sirmur Raja, the Guru also built a fort at Paonta Sahib,²⁰ the remains of which are still existent.

The Battle of Bhangani

While the Guru was at Paonta Sahib, the marriage of the son of Kahlur chief with the daughter of Fateh Shah of Garhwal was settled. Since Fateh Shah was a friend of the Guru, the latter sent *tambol* (gifts) to the Garhwal Raja. When Raja Bhim Chand learnt about this he wrote to Fateh Shah reminding the latter about the old estrangement between him and the Guru and informed the Tehri ruler that the marriage would not take place if the friendship between the Guru and Fateh Shah continued. Consequently Fateh Shah had to return the wedding gifts, much to the displeasure of the Guru. The Guru was cut to the quick by this unprovoked indignity and threw down the gunlet (armour) when the Raja of Kahlur was returning after the wedding.

Guru Gobind Singh has also mentioned in his autobiography, the *Bachitar Natak* that Raja Bhim Chand fought with him without any cause.²¹ However, it appears that the bitterness between the Guru and the hill chiefs was also due to the fact that the Guru's army also included some rebel Pathan deserters from the Mughal army. Some of them had joined the Guru merely for the sake of booty. Perhaps these were the people who were primarily responsible for the repeated outrages on the hill people, about which we get many indications in the Sikh accounts. Whatever may have been the real cause, a battle was fought at Bhangani, about 13 Kms northward from Paonta Sahib sometime in the year 1686 A.D.²²

The allies of Raja Bhim Chand were Raja Kirpal Singh Katoch, Raja Kesari Chand Jaswan-wala, Raja Sukhdev Chand of Jasrota and Raja Hari Chand of Hindur. As advised by Pamma, the Kahlur chief's family priest, the Raja formally declared war against the Guru. Bhim Chand collected all his confederate Rajas and with an emotional speech, appealed to them to help him in either killing the Guru or sending him in custody of Aurangzeb who would deal with him as he had done with his father, Guru Teg Bahadur.²³

On the side of the Guru, Mohri Chand, Gulab Rai, Sahib Chand, Hari Chand, Kirpal Chand, Prohit Daya Ram, Jaita, Rana Sanga, Jowaharji, Udaji and other veterans advanced to clash with the hill Rajas. Bribed by the hill Rajas, the Pathans, who had been employed on the recommendation of Pir Budhu Shah, went over to the enemy a few hours before the battle. Only Kale Khan and his hundred men remained loyal

and also one Sadhu Kirpal Dass remained behind to live or die with the Guru.

On the mere basis of the Guru's account in his autobiography the *Bachitar Natak*, it is difficult to comprehend clearly the way in which the two armies had deployed themselves to fight this battle. It, however, appears that the armies on both sides were divided into units with separate leaders making their moves on the directions of Fateh Shah and the Guru, the supreme commanders of their respective armies²⁴. The Guru himself selected an elevated ground and could see the whole of the force on the other side and could direct his men with an advantage denied to his opponents.

The units commanded by Guru's four cousins, the two Kirpals and Daya Ram, Sahib Chand and Diwan Chand, dashed to the field on horse back or on foot; some with bows and arrows, the others with swords and clubs. Of the unit commanders, only Sangho Shah remained behind, probably in readiness to reinforce the attack when necessary.²⁵ The Guru's bold move was rewarded when Mahant Kirpal hit Hayat Khan on the head and killed the Pathan deserter. This was followed by an utter confusion in the Pathan ranks. Now it was the turn of the hill troops of Gopal and Hari Chand to take the lead. The Guru sent Jit Mal who succeeded in fatally wounding Hari Chand and making him unconscious. He was the best commander on the side of the hill rajas. On regaining consciousness, Hari Chand again rallied to his side and fought bravely which encouraged Fateh Shah's men to continue the battle. It was only when the Guru succeeded in killing him that the battle ended in favour of the Guru.²⁶

In commemoration of the *satis*, probably the wives of the fallen heroes, there still exists a dome shaped tomb in a dilapidated condition at Bhangani. A stone inscription also exists on one of the tombs which is mostly worn out beyond legibility. It however, does indicate that the *sati* was a Rani and she burnt herself in 1686. Since the battle of Bhangani was fought in the same year, it can be fairly assumed that the monument is in commemoration of the *Ranees* of the fallen Rajas.

Battle of Nadaun

After the battle of Bhangani, the Guru returned to the Kahlur

territory where he founded the village of Anandpur. He was now apparently living on friendly terms with Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur and the occasion soon came when the Guru was called upon to give a practical demonstration of his friendship.²⁸

During the same period emperor Aurangzeb deputed one of the imperial commanders, Alif Khan to collect the annual tribute from the hill Rajas of Kangra, Jaswal, Dhadwal, Jasrota and others. The tribute was promptly paid by Kangra chief Kirpal Chand Kotoch who also advised Alif Khan to realise the dues from Bhim Chand of Kahlur, the strongest among the other hill chiefs, so that the others may also pay the tribute automatically. Accordingly an envoy was sent to the Kahlur chief but the latter refused to pay the tribute and instead started preparing for a war with the Mughal commander²⁹. He sought the military assistance of Guru Gobind Singh³⁰.

On the refusal of Bhim Chand to pay the arrears of the tribute, the Mughal forces marched to Bilaspur. A halt was ordered in the plain of Nadaun. Bhim Chand held a council of war in haste and it was unanimously decided to oppose the advancing Mughal forces. The allied Rajas (Kirpal Chand, Kesari Chand, Prithi Chand, Sukh Dev and others) brought their respective forces and opposed the Mughal forces desperately. The Rajputs fought well but could not hope to win against a powerful enemy. During the night, the Rajas again met and resolved to seek the assistance of Guru Gobind Singh and accordingly despatched an ambassador to Anandpur Sahib³¹.

At first the Guru hesitated to enter into an alliance, but when he considered that the time was not distant when he himself would have to offer resistance to the enemies of the hill Rajas, he decided to offer assistance. Accordingly Diwan Nand Chand was ordered to take five hundred chosen men and before dawn, the Guru himself reached Nadaun with a considerable force. The arrows shot by the combined forces wrought havoc in the Mughal camp. Raja Dayal Chand, an ally of Alif Khan, was killed by an arrow despatched by the Guru and when his friend Kripal Chand too was wounded, the Mughal army lost heart and retreated under cover of darkness³².

Guru Gobind Singh writes in his *Bachitar Natak* about his participation in the battle of Nadaun to assist the hill Raja. Bhim Chand

himself led the forces invoking the name of Hanuman³³. Kirpal fought with great courage although he was surrounded on all sides. The people of Nanglu (sons of Raja of Kahlur) and Panglu (Rajputs of Chamba) Jaswan and the Guru advanced in order and on the other side Raja Dayal defended mighty³⁴.

Bhim Chand and the confederate Rajas of Himachal Pradesh expressed their gratitude to the Guru and pressed him to stay with them and enjoy their hospitality. The events narrated above make it clear that Guru Gobind Singh held no ill will against the Kahlur chief inspite of his treachery on numerous occasions. This is established from the facts such as:

- (1) Had there been any ill feeling in the mind of the Guru against Raja Bhim Chand, he would have pursued the defeated chiefs (in the battle of Bhangani) and would have attempted to annex their territories.
- (2) During his three years stay at Paonta, the Guru also attempted to defuse the enmity between the Sirmur and the Garhwal chiefs and the Guru's efforts were fully appreciated by the young chief of Sirmur.
- (3) Guru Gobind Singh would never have assisted Raja Bhim Chand against the attack by the Mughal forces at the battle of Nadaun. The Nadaun battle, on the other hand, indicates that the Guru considered it his sacred duty to give military assistance to any oppressed people, even if they were his opponents³⁵.

However, the Nadaun experience left the Guru in no illusions from the side of Raja Bhim Chand. This is apparent from the subsequent events.

Guru Gobind Singh and Sirmur

As stated earlier, Raja Medini Parkash, the ruler of Sirmur, invited the Guru in his state in 1695 A.D. The Guru accepted the invitation and set up his camp on the banks of Yamuna near Paonta. It is however, difficult to say whether the Sirmur Raja invited the Guru due to his deep reverence for the Guru and his mission or probably he

calculated that the presence of the Guru and his armed men will be useful for his state. The two neighbouring states of Sirmur and Garhwal had a long standing enmity³⁶. The Guru was allowed to build a fort there, which was perhaps the minimum which Guru Gobind Singh demanded before shifting to the place which the Sirmur chief had chosen for the Guru to settle down.

Guru Gobind Singh was destined to stay at Paonta for three years. His immediate task was to improve the relationship between the two rival states and at the same time to increase his military strength. The Guru succeeded in putting an end to the sored relationship between Nahan and the Garhwal states, which was one of his best diplomatic achievements. The Guru also made his position at Paonta secure (at least for some time) due to the conciliation he brought about between Fateh Shah and Medini Parkash.

Guru Gobind Singh and Mandi

The contemporary chief of Mandi during the period of Guru Gobind Singh was Raja Sidh Sen (1684-1727 A.D.). The sources concerning the state of Mandi do not refer to the participation of the chief of Mandi in the battles of Bhangani or Nadaun. It appears that the Sikh traditional accounts casually mention the names of all the hill rajas, including the Raja of Mandi, fighting against the Guru³⁷.

The traditonal accounts also refer to the visit of Guru Gobind Singh to Kulu and Mandi states. It is, however, clear that since the inception of the Khalsa army in 1699 up to the battle of Chamkaur, the Guru was never at peace as he was troubled both by the Mughals as well as the hill rajas. if we assume that the visit of the Guru have been actually undertaken, this particular Raja of Kulu (Raj Singh) came to power in 1719 and reigned upto 1731 A.D., whereas the Guru had died much before that date in 1708 A.D. Even in his autobiography, *Bachitar Natak*, the Guru has not hinted about his visit to Kulu and Mandi.

Regarding Guru's visit to Mandi, it is mentioned by Hutchison and Vogel that the Guru visited Mandi and blessed its Raja, Sidh Sen.³⁸ On the departure of the Guru, the Raja was told to ask anything he wished and thereupon the Raja requested an assurance that his capital would never be occupied by an enemy. The Guru gave utterance to the following

couplet:

‘Mandi ko jab lootenge,
Asmani gole chhootenge.’ i.e.

‘When Mandi is plundered, heavenly cannons will be fired.’
The above couplet is still current in Mandi³⁹.

Hindur (Nalagarh):

According to the traditional accounts, Dharam Chand, one of the eight sons of the ruler of Hindur, sought the help of Guru Hargobind in the crusade against his father in 1618 in the war of succession for the Hindur *gaddi*. It was with the military assistance of the Guru that Sansar Chand, the Raja of Hindur was defeated and Dharam Chand was installed on the *gaddi* of Hindur in 1618 A.D.⁴⁰

Seven year later, (when Jahangir died in 1625 A.D) Guru Hargobind sent his eldest son Gurditta to Hindur to establish a Sikh centre in the territory of Raja Dharam Chand. Upon his arrival, Gurditta was well received in Hindur and he was helped to establish a centre at the present site of Kiratpur which lay close to the border to Kahlur. Raja Dharam Chand found the Sikh Guru and his armed contingents very useful as he was able to defeat the Nawab of Ropar in 1642 A.D., with the help of Guru Hargobind.

When Guru Teg Bahadur returned to Punjab in 1671 A.D., he established his headquarters at two places; one, at Makhowal in Kahlur and the other at Kiratpur in Hindur.⁴¹

For nearly a decade, the existence of the Guru’s headquarters in two principalities did not create any complications. However, due to a general stir in the hills against the Mughals around 1670’s, the chiefs of Hindur and Kahlur forgot their mutual differences and remained indulgent towards the Sikhs, particularly after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur in 1675 A.D.

With the change in Guruship at Makhowal, Bhim Chand did not remain immune to the new developments. The Guru’s headquarters lay on the borders of his state and were in the vicinity of Hindur and the

Mughal territory. Bhim Chand found an active ally in the chief of Hindur who was equally apprehensive of the growing strength of Guru Gobind Singh, close to the borders of Hindur.

The hill chiefs saw in the activities of the Guru, a threat to their own power.⁴² Consequently, almost a regular war was launched against the Guru. In fact Guru Gobind Singh's success during the three years that followed the battle of Nadaun, was phenomenal. His large congregations and rapidly increasing military strength seem to have unnerved the Mughals also. The Kangra *faujdar* and a few hill Rajas sought emperor Aurangzeb's directions to meet the growing threat from the Guru's side.

Guru Gobind Singh, the Mughals and the Hill Rajas

The Guru's assistance to Raja Bhim Chand and other hill chiefs (in the battle of Nadaun) had directly contributed to the defeat of Dilawar Khan, the *subedar* of Lahore. A campaign⁴³ was accordingly launched against the Guru under the leadership of Rustam Khan, the *subedar*'s son. The Mughal army, however, met a disgraceful defeat from the Sikh forces under the command of Guru Gobind Singh.

Enraged at the defeat of the Mughal forces, the *subedar* of Lahore now sent another expedition against the Guru, under the command of his adopted son, Hussain. Alif Khan, Kirpa Ram and Chandan Singh (the Raja of Nurpur) were also sent along with Hussain as his lieutenants. Bhim Chand of Bilaspur and his ally Kirpal Chand Katoch, found good opportunity to expel the Guru from his headquarters. Both joined Hussain and offered their services for the subjugation of Anandpur and the capture of the Guru.⁴⁴

On receiving the news of the hostile attitude of the hill chiefs, the Guru gave orders for the defence of Anandpur. Diwan Nand Chand was placed in command of the garrison. When Hussain was marching towards Anandpur, Raja Gopal Chand of Guler, afraid of the cruelties of the fierce invader, met him on the way and offered a part of the tribute. However Bhim Chand and Kirpal Chand suggested the capture of the Raja and when Hussain laid siege to Guler, Gopal Chand escaped to the hills⁴⁵.

In the fierce battle that followed between the Guru and the Mughal commander, the latter was killed and the second Muslim attempt

to capture Anandpur was also foiled by the Sikh forces. Soon after hearing about the defeat of the Mughal forces, Dilwar Khan again despatched a large army against the Guru. However, his passage was opposed by the Raja of Jaswan, in whose territory a decisive battle was fought and the Mughal forces again suffered a defeat and retreated to Lahore⁴⁶.

The two successive defeats weakened the Mughal administration on the hills. However, the obtrusive presence of the *Khalsa* at Anandpur obliged some of the hill chiefs to form a coalition against the Guru. The combination, though suggested by self interest, was dictated by helplessness of each individual chief against the solid defence of Anandpur.

After consulting each other, the hill Rajas sent an ultimatum to the Guru to leave the hills. The assistance of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was also sought⁴⁷, since the expulsion of the Guru from Anandpur was not possible single handedly by them, particularly in face of the strategically advantageous position of Anandpur as well as the combative supremacy of the Sikhs.

Emperor Aurangzeb was at that time, engaged in the Deccan wars. However, on the receipt of the message from the hill Rajas, he sent orders for the suppression of the growing Sikh power. Adina Beg, the Mughal commander, along with Painda Khan, a brave Pathan as his lieutenant, started with 10,000 men against the Guru. The hill Rajas also brought their men to help the Mughal commander. In the battle that ensued, the allied forces once again fared badly, as Prince Ajit Singh, along with veteran warriors, committed tremendous slaughter in the ranks of the hill men and routed them completely.

The Mughal and hill chiefs' combined forces retreated to Bilaspur and resolved to make another effort to subjugate the Sikhs. This time, they were helped by a renowned warrior, Azmatullah, a leader of the Gujjars. The Guru's army was strengthened by reinforcements from Malwa. The fortresses of Fatehgarh, Lohgarh and Anandgarh were garrisoned. The command of Majha Singhs was entrusted to Deva Singh and that of the Malwa Sikhs to Prince Ajit Singh. The hill army surrounded the Sikhs from all sides and though they fought with their usual gallantry, they were not able to hold their ground. Azmatullah was killed but the battle continued. In the renewed battle, the Sikhs had to face a retreat and the Guru was obliged to evacuate Nirmoh⁴⁸.

The Sikhs suffered a reverse in this battle and the Guru retreated to Basohli, in the dominion of Raja Dharampal, who was a sincere admirer of the Guru. Sometime later the Guru left Basohli with a view to re-occupy Anandpur. Back at Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh again started to strengthen his position by improving the fortifications of Anandpur for the purpose of defence. Once again the Khalsa *sangat* started visiting Anandpur in large numbers. Apparently Guru Gobind Singh and his Sikhs were becoming more formidable a power than ever before. As the Guru's followers increased day by day, the problem of supply became more and more acute. According to Saina Pati, the Sikh horsemen rode into the neighbouring villages to levy contribution in kind from the reluctant hillmen. The authority of the hill chiefs, particularly of Raja Bhim Chand, was openly defied.

Consequently, the hill chiefs were left with no alternative but to renew the conflict and to represent⁴⁹ their plight to the Mughal government once again. The longstanding conflict between the hill Rajas and the determined Guru of the *Khalsa* was coming to its climax in the latter half of 1704 A.D.⁵⁰

Specific instructions were sent by emperor Aurangzeb to the *subedar* of *Lahore* and the *faujdar* of Sirhind to aid the hill chiefs in their conflict with the Sikh Guru. Thus a formidable combination was formed against the Guru. The allied forces, however, failed to take Anandpur by assault. Fighting continued for several days, but without any success to the allies. The Mughal commanders finally laid siege to starve the Guru and the *Khalsa* to submission. When the situation became desperate, some of those present in the fort, became keen to evacuate the fort. The Mughal commanders in particular appear to have promised safe evacuation to the Guru in the name of the emperor, if the Sikhs leave Anandpur and settle down somewhere else. Consequently, the Guru evacuated Anandpur on December 21, 1704 A.D.⁵¹

Thus the great scheme (of formation of a coalition which would have considerably facilitated the work of weakening the Mughal power) was never appreciated by the hill Rajas, in whose interests it had been conceived and adopted. As we have seen, the priestly dominated hill Rajas were instrumental in the ultimate defeat of the Guru and scattering the Sikh forces (with the help of the Imperial forces) during the last siege of Anandpur.⁵²

B. MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH AND KANGRA HILLS

After the death of Aurangzeb, his successor Bahadur Shah occupied the throne. The new Mughal emperor was friendly towards the Guru as the latter had given him military assistance in the war of succession. The Guru accompanied emperor Bahadur Shah to the Deccan. It was during his Deccan visit that Guru Gobind Singh met Banda Bairagi at Nanded in 1708. He became an ardent devotee of the Guru who persuaded him to go to Punjab and fight against the enemies of the *Khalsa*.

As soon as Banda reached Punjab a large number of Sikhs gathered under his banner. In the first instance, Sirhind was sacked and a terrible vengeance was wrecked on the Mughal governor.⁵³ Then came the turn of other territories like, Amritsar, Batala, Kalanaur, Pathankot and Lahore, which were all looted and sacked. Alarmed at the activities of Banda Singh Bahadur, the Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah sent a large contingent of Mughal force under the command of Amin Khan to subdue Banda. The latter was besieged in the fort of Lohgarh and compelled to flee towards the hills in 1710 A.D.

After his tactical escape from Lohgarh, Banda did not loose heart as we find him issuing *Hukamnamas* to the *Khalsa*.⁵⁴ Under Banda's instructions, the Sikhs gathered at Kiratpur in the Shiwalik hills. It was first decided to secure the sub-mountainous hinter land. Banda's first victim, therefore, became Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur, the tormentor of Guru Gobind Singh.

Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur, could not withstand the onslaught of a tireless Banda. Kahlur was captured and sacked.⁵⁵ The town was looted and a large booty fell into the hands of the Sikhs.⁵⁶ The defeat of Raja Bhim Chand demoralised the other hill chiefs of the Shiwalik hills. In order to avoid the devastation of their territories, they voluntarily submitted to Banda Singh Bahadur, offered him *nazrana* and assured him of their loyalty.⁵⁷ The first among them was Raja Sidh Sen of Mandi and next was the Raja of Chamba both of whom submitted to Banda.⁵⁸

Meanwhile emperor Bahadur Shah was succeeded by Jahandar Shah and after some time he was ousted by Faurkh Siyar. The latter chose one of his best generals, Abdus Samad Khan to chastise Banda. Banda Bahadur came down from the hills to face the Mughal forces in 1715 and

after a heroic resistance lasting for about eight months, Banda was captured and executed in June 1716 along with many other Sikhs.⁵⁹

The Sikh movement however, did not end with the execution of Banda Bahadur. Although the Sikh free booters were relentlessly pursued and slain, yet the Sikhs now and then would create disturbance, plunder caravans and after looting the royal *khazana*, would flee to the hills and the impenetrable forests of Himachal Pradesh.

The Misal Period

The death of Banda Singh Bahadur left the Sikhs leaderless. However, soon they organised themselves in 65 roving bands and by the middle of the eighteenth century all these bands were amalgamated into *Dal Khalsa* with its two main divisions - the *Buddha Dal* and the *Taruna Dal*. By 1765 A.D. the two *dals* had been divided into twelve important commands, popularly known as the *misals*.⁶⁰

With the rise of the Sikh *misals*, a new phase in the relations of Sikhs with the Himachal Hill States was established. A contest now started among the various *misals* to occupy almost all the neighbouring territories in the area of their operations. Of the *misal* chiefs, Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgarhia was quick to encroach in the hill areas and by 1770 A.D. the chiefs of Kangra (Raja Ghamand Chand), Nurpur (Raja Prithvi Singh) and Chamba (Raja Raj Singh) were made tributary to the Ramgarhia Sardar. The territories of Dipalpur, Datarpur, Amarpur, Haripur and Jaswan too were annexed by the Ramgarhia chief and now his possessions included almost the entire territory between the Ravi and Beas apart from vast areas in the Jullundur Doab.⁶¹

The authority of the Ramgarhia chief in the Himachal hills, however was short lived as he was defeated by Sardar Jai Singh of the Kanhaiya Misal and the latter now assumed the sovereignty of the Kangra group of states. We are told that by 1775 A.D., Jai Singh Kanhaiya defeated the Ramgarhia chief in alliance with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and the chief of Kangra and annexed the territories of Nurpur, Datarpur and Siba. The chiefs of these and other adjoining territories were made tributaries to the Kanhaiya chief.⁶² The fort of Kangra remained in possession of the Kanhaiya Sardar at least till 1786 A.D., when finally he was defeated by Sansar Chand and his allies. Jai Singh Kanhaiya vacated

the fort and it was occupied by its legitimate owner, the Katoch chief Sansar Chand.

It will thus be seen that between the death of Guru Gobind Singh and the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh affairs in the hill states were based on expediency, safety in the hills and territorial ambitions. During the later half of the eighteenth century, the Sikhs had acquired a respectable military status thanks to the weakening of the Mughal hold over Punjab and Punjab hill states as well as the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali from across the north-west. This provided them with the ample opportunity to organise themselves into *misals* who were finally absorbed into one single authority under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. With the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh at the close of the eighteenth century, the relations between the sovereign ruler of Punjab and the Himachal hill states assumed a new dimension. The reign of Ranjit Singh led to humiliating defeats of all the hill states and their annexation to the Lahore Durbar. These were ceded to the British government ultimately in 1846 after the defeat of the Sikhs and this also led to an end of their domination in the hills.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Hill States of Himachal

The post-Abdali period saw the rise of Ranjit Singh of Sukarchakiya *misal*, who was successful in liquidating all the warring *misals* and bringing them under a single central rule. The Maharaja gave the Sikhs half a century of stable, political power until the downfall of their power in the middle of the nineteenth century. During the period, the various chiefs of the Punjab hill states, taking advantage of the weakening of the Mughal and Afghan hold over the Punjab hills, assumed semi or full independence and continued to enjoy the same until about 1767 A.D., when most of these states could not remain immune from the growing Sikh influence.

It may be noted that the eastern group of states (between the rivers Sutlej and Ravi) consisted of nearly a dozen principalities, popularly known as the Kangra hill states. Of these the closest to the plains were Kangra, Nurpur, Guler, Jaswan, Siba, Datarpur and Kutlehr. As mentioned earlier, Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgarhia collected tributes from the above mentioned states but by 1776, Jai Singh Kanhaiya replaced Jassa Singh Ramgarhia and succeeded even in occupying the Kangra fort.

Modern researches reveal that Chamba also remained tributary to Jassa Singh Ramgarhia and Amar Singh of Phulkian *misal*.⁶³

During the period of chaos and confusion that followed immediately after the death of emperor Aurangzeb, and the ruthless persecutions of the Sikhs by the governors of Punjab, on the one hand and Durrani invasions on the other; Raja Ghamband Chand, the grand-father of Sansar Chand Katoch, regained power of the hill territories lost by his ancestors earlier.⁶⁴ In 1759, Ghamband Chand was appointed *nazim* (governor) of Jullundur doab between Sutlej and Ravi.⁶⁵ He died in 1774 and was succeeded by his son Teg Chand. However, the latter died after a year and then the principality of Kangra passed on to his son, Sansar Chand in 1775 A.D. The early nineteenth century saw the rise of two most powerful chiefs: one in the plains of Punjab and the other in the hills of Himachal.

It may be recalled here that the Kangra fort passed on to Sansar Chand after the retreat of Jai Singh Kanhaiya in 1781. The fort had remained in Mughal possession for about a century and a half and subsequently it was retained by Kanhaiya *misaldar* for about a decade before it finally passed on to Sansar Chand, its legitimate owner.

Soon after the formal possession of the Kangra fort, Sansar Chand embarked upon an operation of expansion in the adjoining hill states which included Chamba, Kotlabar, Suket, Mandi. Apart from these, the States of Jaswan, Kahlur, Guler, Siba and Datarpur also acknowledged the leadership of Sansar Chand.⁶⁶ Thus by the third quarter of the eighteenth century, Sansar Chand was at the pinnacle of his power. In the words of Amar Nath 'Sansar Chand around 1800 A.D. was holding afloat the banner of 'none but I'.⁶⁷

Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Kangra

In 1803, Sansar Chand, in continuation of his plans of aggrandisement, made two attempts to occupy parts of the fertile Doab of Jullunder but was repulsed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his confederates. Next year Sansar Chand again invaded the plains and was successful in capturing Bijwara and Hoshiarpur. However, on Ranjit Singh's approach, he was compelled to retreat. Unaccustomed to the use of fire-arms, Sansar Chand's forces failed to defend his acquisitions in the south against the troops of Lahore.⁶⁸

By 1804 A.D., the Gurkhas had penetrated the petty Simla Hill States.⁶⁹ Amar Singh Thapa, one of the ablest Nepalese commanders, had swept the Himalayan foothills and had established his supremacy over Chamba, Nurpur, Kotla, Jasrota, Basohli, Jaswan, Mandi, Suket and Kulu. He now knocked at the doors of Kangra, which but for the timely intervention of Ranjit Singh, would have fallen to the Gurkha arms.

Ranjit Singh had already ousted Sansar Chand from Hoshiarpur and Bijwara. Meanwhile the disaffected hill chiefs,⁷⁰ whom the Katoch chief had oppressed systematically and brought under his subjugation, appealed to the Gurkha commander for relief from the grip of Sansar Chand.⁷¹ In May 1806 A.D., their combined forces defeated Sansar Chand at Mahal Mori. Amar Singh now advanced to Kot Kangra and laid siege to it.⁷²

The fertile valley of Kangra now became a scene of struggle between Sansar Chand and the Gurkhas, which led to utter chaos in the hill state.⁷³ Sansar Chand thus became helpless against the rising tide of the Gurkhas and sent frantic appeals to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The latter was also too eager and was only waiting for this sort of an opportunity to take possession of the Kangra fort. He demanded the possession of the fort as a price for driving out the Gurkhas from the Katoch territories.

Sansar Chand, however, was not willing to sacrifice the Kangra fort and therefore he approached Jaswant Rao Holkar for similar help but of no avail.⁷⁴ Due to the worsening situation, Sansar Chand was left with no option but to appeal again to the Maharaja for help. Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not hold a high opinion about Sansar Chand but at the same time he never wanted the Gurkhas to annex the Punjab hills. Consequently, Ranjit Singh despatched a Sikh force under the command of Diwan Mohkam Chand, one of his ablest commanders, along with Sardar Fateh Singh Kalianwala. As soon as the Gurkha commander, Amar Singh Thapa, heard about the approach of the Sikh forces in the Kangra hills, he proposed to the Maharaja to accept a large *nazrana* and not to give any military assistance to Sansar Chand. Since Sansar Chand agreed to cede the fort after the defeat and expulsion of the Gurkhas, the Gurkha offer was turned down.

The Majoraja instructed Diwan Mohkam Chand to make sure that the fort of Kangra was taken possession of prior to any help to Raja

Sansar Chand. The latter, however, promised to hand over the fort only after the expulsion of the Gurkhas and offered his eldest son Anirudh Chand as a hostage. Meanwhile the Diwan had to be recalled without his having accomplishing the task of freeing the Kangra valley from the Gurkha menace as the relations between the British and Maharaja Ranjit Singh had meanwhile, become strained.

The Diwan left the valley after leaving detachments at Bijwara and Nadaun. Sardar Fatch Singh Kalianwala too remained in Kangra and resumed operations against the Gurkhas. He cut the Gurkha line of communications and thus contributed effectively towards the subsequent defeat and retreat of the Gurkhas.

In 1809 A.D., the Gurkhas again pressed their long continued siege of Kangra. This time, before appealing to Ranjit Singh, Raja Sansar Chand approached the British for help but the latter declined as his territory lay outside their sphere of interest.⁷⁵ Thus, again Sansar Chand appealed to the Maharaja for help and agreed to hand over the fort if the latter helped him in expelling the Gurkhas.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who had been relieved of the British threat after the conclusion of the Treaty of Lahore (April, 1809 A.D.), accepted Sansar Chand's request. The agreement was formally made between the two parties with the mediation of Nathu, the *wazir* of Chamba state and the Raja of Guler. The treaty was signed at Jwala Mukhi on July 20, 1809.⁷⁷ This time Sardar Desa Singh Majithia also accompanied Diwan Mohkam Chand. Soon after their approach, the Sikh officers effectively dealt with the Gurkhas by cutting off their line of supply.

The Gurkhas gave a thorough fight along the Ganesh Ghati but could not withstand the Sikh offensive. After two severe engagements, the Gurkhas were defeated. The Nepali commander and his defeated forces retreated further till they crossed the Sutlej, abandoning their conquests on the right side of the river. It is also stated that the Gurkha commander arranged for his retreat by paying one lakh rupees to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Thus ended the Gurkha menace in the Kangra hills for ever.

The retreat of the Gurkhas and the annexation of Kangra fort, which was formally handed over by Sansar Chand to the Sikhs on August

24, 1809,⁷⁸ led to an easy capture of the adjoining territories.⁷⁹ Sardar Desa Singh Majithia, who had played a prominent part in this victory, was appointed the *qiladar* of the fort as well as the *nazim* (governor) of the Kangra and the adjoining hill states.⁸⁰

From that day onwards, the Maharaja's hold over the hill areas continued increasing till he finally subdued the major part of present Himachal Pradesh, as we shall observe soon. After the capture of Kangra by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh influence became supreme in all the hill states which were annexed to Lahore *Durbar*, one after the other in the subsequent years.

In 1815 A.D., Ranjit Singh despatched the Sikh forces to extract tributes from the hill chiefs. In the winter of 1815, the Maharaja divided his forces into two parts and ordered them to reassemble at Sialkot. The chiefs of Nurpur and Jaswan, however, failed to welcome the Maharaja. A heavy fine was imposed on Umed Singh, the chief of Jaswan, who being unable to pay, surrendered his principality and accepted a small *jagir*. The chief of Nurpur, Bir Singh, also met with the same fate.⁸¹ In 1818 A.D., the chief of Datarpur, Govind Chander died and his principality too was annexed. The new successor was given a *jagir* for his subsistence by the Maharaja.⁸²

Finally came the turn of Siwan whose chief agreed to marry his daughter off to Raja Dhian Singh, the Maharaja's minister. Thus Siwan was saved from direct annexation and it remained attached to Dhian Singh. In 1825, the Sikh forces encircled the Kotla fortress and captured it after a siege lasting for two months. The chief was given a *jagir* of two thousand rupees and the fortress was annexed to Ranjit Singh's kingdom.

Meanwhile Sansar Chand in alliance with Raja Kishan Singh of Suket, tried to conquer Mandi but the chief of Mandi received timely assistance from the Maharaja. The Suket chief was imprisoned and his forces were compelled to retreat. Sansar Chand's protests to Ranjit Singh did not yield any result because of the latter's skilful diplomacy and superior tactics.

Sansar Chand, whose power was once dreaded by the adjoining hill states and who had dreamt of a supremacy extending from Jamuna to Jhelum, sank into the position of an insignificant dependent. William

Moorcroft, who visited Kangra in 1823 met Raja Sansar Chand in reduced and desperate⁸³ circumstances.

Raja Sansar Chand died in 1824 A.D. During this year Maharaja Ranjit Singh was at Dinanagar. A *nazrana* of rupees two lakhs was demanded from his son Anirudh Chand as succession fee to the Kangra seat. The young chief demurred and consequently Faqir Azizuddin (Maharaja's most trusted foreign minister) was sent to Nadaun with a Sikh cavalry to realise the amount.

Anirudh Chand being alarmed at the approach of the Sikh forces, accompanied the Faqir to Jwala Mukhi, where the court was held and paid rupees one lakh whereupon the balance was remitted. Prince Kharak Singh exchanged turbans, in token of his brotherhood, with the new heir of the tributary.⁸⁴

Maharaja Ranjīt Singh and the other Hill States

As we have already observed, soon after the fall of the Kangra fort in 1809 A.D., the various other hill chiefs, who were earlier tributary to Sansar Chand, met with the same fate. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very ambitious and was bent upon destroying the hill states through diplomacy and warfare. The duplicity of Sansar Chand, the Gurkha attack and the aid given by Bilaspur and other chiefs to the Gurkhas, paved the way for fulfilling the aims of Maharaja Ranjīt Singh without much difficulty.

Even before the fall of Kangra fort, Diwan Mohkam Chand was assigned the task of reducing Pathankot in 1807 A.D. The Diwan captured Pathankot easily and moved on to Jasrota, Chamba and Basohli and compelled their chiefs to acknowledge the authority of Maharaja Ranjīt Singh.⁸⁵ That Chamba state became a regular tributary to Lahore Durbar is also known from subsequent events. The small state of Bhadarwah (an off-shoot of Basohli) had long been tributary to Chamba but in 1820 its chief refused to continue the tribute.⁸⁶ Accordingly, Nathu, the *wazir* of Chamba⁸⁷ state (who was in good books of Ranjīt Singh and had rendered important personal service to him during invasion of Kashmir in 1814) was directed to proceed towards Bhadarwah but was defeated. It was only with the help of Ranjīt Singh (in 1821) that the state was compelled to pay tribute to Chamba, then under the control of the Sikhs.⁸⁸

The State of Nurpur too was annexed by Sardar Desa Singh Majithia, on behalf of Ranjit Singh soon after the fall of Kangra. As already stated, in 1812, the Maharaja came in person with an army to Dinanagar in 1812 for extracting tribute from the hill Rajas. The chief of Nurpur was called upon to pay rupees forty thousand.⁸⁹ In the autumn of 1815, the Maharaja summoned all his Sardars and other tributary chiefs to a great military assembly at Sialkot. The Rajas of Nurpur and Jaswan did not turn up and consequently a heavy fine was imposed on each of the two chiefs which they found impossible to pay.

In case of Nurpur, its Raja, Bir Singh, found himself unable to pay the enhanced demand even to the extent of mortgaging and selling his family idols etc. The state of Nurpur was thus attached to Lahore *Durbar*. A *jagir* was offered to the Raja which he refused and escaped towards Chamba.⁹⁰ After a period of ten years of self-exile, Bir Singh made another attempt to gain the fortress of Nurpur and laid siege to it. When the news reached Lahore, Maharaja despatched a force under Desa Singh Majithia and on the approach of the Sikh forces, Bir Singh fled towards Chamba, whose chief promptly delivered him to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Nurpur chief remained confined in the Gobindgarh fort at Amritsar for seven years.⁹¹ Thus all attempts on the part of Nurpur chief to regain his territory met with a complete failure.

In case of the state of Mandi too, its chief, Raja Isri Sen was compelled to pay a *nazrana* of Rs. 30,000/- to Lahore *Durbar* since 1809 and the same continued to be realised till 1815 A.D. During this period, Zalim Sen, the brother of Mandi chief, out of ill-will against Isri Sen, went over to the court of Ranjit Singh and sought the latter's assistance in securing the Mandi seat for himself. The Maharaja espoused the cause of Zalim Sen and a tribute of one lakh was imposed upon Isri Sen to retain possession of his territory.⁹²

In 1816 the Maharaja sent *jamadar* Khushal Singh to Mandi for collection of the annual tribute. The Mandi chief quietly retired into Kulu territory with his retainers in a bid to oppose the Sikhs with the help of the Kulu *wazir*. Later, however, he returned to Mandi and after bribing Khushal Singh, obtained a reduction in the annual tribute to rupees fifty thousand. This arrangement continued till the death of the Mandi chief in 1826 A.D. During this period Sardar Lehna Singh was stationed at Mandi with a Sikh force to keep a watch over the hill Rajas.

The next chief of Mandi, who succeeded Isri Sen was Zalim Sen who had to pay one lakh rupees as succession duty to the Lahore *Durbar*. Zalim Sen continued to pay rupees seventy five thousand till his death in 1839 A.D., after which the state administration passed on to Raja Balbir Sen, who too continued as a tributary chief on the same terms and conditions.⁹³

In case of the state of Bilaspur, it has already been stated that in 1805 A.D., its chief Mahan Chand invited the Gurkha leader to invade Kangra⁹⁴ whereupon Raja Sansar Chand was obliged to seek military assistance from Maharaja Ranjit Singh in expelling the Gurkhas. After the Gurkha retreat, the claim of Bilaspur was disallowed by the British government. The state was brought directly under the British control. In 1819, Sardar Desa Singh Majithia, the governor of Kangra, invaded the right bank of the Sutlej, where the Sikhs were powerful. When the Sikh forces crossed Sutlej, the British intervened and forced the Sikhs to retire. The state of Bilaspur, however, continued to pay a tribute to Lahore kingdom for the territory on the right bank of the Sutlej.⁹⁵

It will thus be seen that during the entire medieval period, the Mughals, the Afghans and the Sikh *misaldars* claimed a shadowy supremacy over the hill states of the present Himachal Pradesh. The various hill chiefs were never completely subject to any of the above powers during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. It was only during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that all the big and small hill states succumbed to the mighty military pressure of the Lahore Kingdom.⁹⁶

The only hope for the hill chiefs for their deliverance from the Sikh dominance during Ranjit Singh's rule, rested towards the Katoch ruler Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra. The latter, however, miserably failed in his political moves. In an attempt to exert his supremacy over the adjoining hill states, he incurred their wrath. Some of the hill chiefs, fed up with the ambitious designs of Sansar Chand, rallied round the Raja of Kahlur and invited the Gurkhas.

The unwise policy of Raja Sansar Chand was responsible for the Gurkha havoc in the Kangra hills. They looted and plundered the valley and compelled the Katoch chief to seek protection from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It was Sansar Chand's unwise policy which brought final

subversion not only of his own state but also of all the adjoining hill states of Nurpur, Jaswan, Siba, Suket, Mandi, Chamba, Kulu, Haripur (Guler), Datarpur, which were all reduced and annexed to Lahore *Durbar* by the well organised Sikh forces.

The relationship of the hill chieftains of Himachal Pradesh with Maharaja Ranjit Singh are important not from the point of view of their quality or nature but because of the adverse effects they produced on the territorial possessions of the hill chiefs. There is also no denying the fact that the hill states did not possess a unitary government or a singular defensive system. Their mutual jealousies and animosities had weakened them so much that any attempt on their part to resist the Sikh pressure met with complete failure.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's insistence on payment of tribute or surrender of the hill states, made the position of the hill chieftains vulnerable and quite often they were obliged to seek protection from the Marathas, Gurkhas or the British. Of these three, only the British made full use of the opportunity and finally succeeded in subjecting them to their political control. This was, however, possible only after the lamp of Lahore kingdom was dimmed in the smoke of civil warfare, intrigues and the Anglo-Sikh Wars.⁹⁷

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- (1) For details see *Puratan Janam Sakhi, Sakhi*, 49.
 - (2) For example see S.S. Kohli, *Travels of Guru Nanak*, (Chandigarh, 1969); Fauja Singh and Kirpal Singh, *Atlas of Travels of Guru Nanak* (Patiala, 1976); N.S. Issar, 'Guru Nanak's Visit to Tibet', *The Sikh Review*, (Calcutta, 1966), pp. 329-333.
 - (3) The Guru is said to have met Arjan and held discussion with him. A Sikh temple nearby commemorates the visit of the Guru at Jwala Mukhi.
 - (4) Fauja Singh and Kirpal Singh (*op.cit.*, pp. 28-29) however, assign the visit of the above places by Guru Nanak during his second *udasi*.
 - (5) Mehrban Janamsakhi, Sakhi, 117, 384, 'Tab Guru Baba..... uttar ki dharti Sumer ko chaleya.' All the scholars also agree to the Guru's visit to Mandi although they have mentioned route which is similar to the case of the Guru's visit to Kulu, Manikaran, Jwala Mukhi and Rawalsar.
 - (6) Piar Singh, *Janamsakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji*, (Amritsar, 1974), p. 79.
 - (7) The Sikh chronicles state that the hill Rajas of Kulu, Suket, Chamba and Haripur visited Guru Arjun Dev and became his followers as the Raja of Mandi had previously done.
 - (8) See B.S. Anand, *Guru Teg Bahadur* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 77. He adds that Hargobind had established excellent relations with the Hill Rajas of Kulu, Suket, Chamba, Mandi, Haripur and Pilibhit. In any case he must have been held in high esteem by these princes and it was but natural that the Guru and the hill rajas often met and exchanged presents.
- See also Garja Singh, *Bhat Bahi Multani Sindhi*, wherein it is stated that in 1624 A.D. 'some land was granted to the Guru by Raja Kalyan Chand.' *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Patiala, 1971, p 136.
- (9) H.R. Gupta, *Studies in Later Mughal History of Punjab*, (Lahore, 1944), p.37.
 - (10) Mohsin Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, tr. vol.II, (Shea and Troyer) London, 1843,

p. 277. The author was a personal friend of Guru Hargobind. *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, (Patiala, 1970), pp. 62-70.

- (11) *Ibid.*, pp. 280-81.
- (12) T.S. Negi, (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteers*, Sirmur, (Aligarh, 1969), p. 51.
- (13) Ganesh Singh, *Shashi Bans Binod*, (Bilaspur, 1892), p. 50
- (14) *Gur Kian Sakhan, Sakhi 22*, B.S. Anand, *Guru Teg Bahadur*, (New Delhi, 1978), pp. 138-39; Cf. Akshar Singh, op.cit., p. 17. It is stated that Raja Kalyan Chand of Bilaspur conferred two villages of Kiratpur and Bilaspur on Guru Hargobind in V.S. 1685.
- (15) According to the Sikh traditional accounts, Paonta was so named after the Guru's residence at the place from 'Patta' (the foot stool). The Guru came to Anandpur and rested his foot at a place which was subsequently named Paonta.
- (16) Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Gur Khalsa* (Patiala, 1970), pp. 76-86. See also Bhai Vir Singh, *Sri Kalghidhar Chamatkari*, Amritsar, 1973.
- (17) T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer*, Sirmur, (Aligarh, 1969), p.54
- (18) See for example *Hukamnama* No. 43, dated 2nd August, 1696 which is directed to Bhai Triloka and Bhai Rama to come with horses. Ganda Singh (ed.) *Hukamname* (Patiala, 1967), pp. 146-47.
- (19) The invitation was extended by Medini Parkash who probably calculated that the Guru and his armed followers would be useful to his State. J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh* (Chandigarh, 1967), p.65. The Sirmur chief probably wished to use the Guru and his men as Sirmur's guardsmen on the frontier.
- (20) For description of Paonta and its association with Guru Gobind Singh see also M.M. Sharma, *Through the Valley of Gods: Travels in the Central Himalayas*, (New Delhi, 1977), pp. 175-77.
- (21) Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*, in Bhai Randhir Singh (ed.) *Shabdarth Dasam Granth*, Vol. I, (Patiala, 1973),p.76.
- (22) Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, (Delhi, 1977), p. 78. Mian Goverdhan Singh, however, mentions the date as April 1687 (*History of Himachal Pradesh*, p. 134) whereas Sirmur Gazetteer places the event in 1684 A.D. (*Himachal District Gazetteer, Sirmur*, p. 54).
- (23) Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *A Short Sketch of the Life and Work of Guru Gobind Singh*, (Patiala, 1970), p. 66.
- (24) J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh : A Biographical Study*, (Chandigarh, 1967), p. 79.

- (25) *Bachitar Natak* in Bhai Randhir Singh, *Shabdarakth Dasam Granth* (Patiala, 1973), pp. 77-87.
- (26) *Ibid.* On the Guru's side, the main casualty was that of Sangho Shah. The Guru was also disappointed in the attitude of the Nahan Raja, Medini Parkash, who remained aloof from the battle. Under these circumstances, Gobind wisely discouraged his excited men to cross Yamuna and march into Garhwal territory. Bhai Sukha Singh, *Gur Bilas Daswin Padshahi*, (Lahore, n.d.), p. 159, cited in J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., p. 82, fn. 70.
- (27) T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer*, Simur (Aligarh, 1969), p. 55
- (28) Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, (Delhi, 1982), p. 134.
- (29) *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35.
- (30) After the battle of Bhangani, Bhim Chand and other hill rajas were convinced that it was not easy to crush the Guru. They therefore sought his favour. Their leader Bhim Chand, accompanied by his minister, Parma Nand, came to the Guru's presence and asked for forgiveness of his past conduct. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, op.cit., p. 75.
- (31) Bhagat Lakshman Singh, op.cit., p. 78
- (32) *Ibid.*, p. 78
- (33) Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak* text, p. 80.
- (34) Guru Gobind Singh, *Bachitar Natak*, *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82
- (35) M.S. Ahluwalia, 'Relations of Bhim Chand of Bilaspur with Guru Gobind Singh' *Somsi* (Hindi), Simla, 1976, Oct. pp. 7-14. These views are also supported by a recently discovered *Hukamnama* of Guru Gobind Singh (dated, October 2, 1707 A.D.), wherein the Guru has instructed his followers to come to Kahlur with arms and ammunition where he (The Guru) will shortly be available. It may prove beyond doubt that had the Guru kept any ill-will towards Bhim Chand, he would never had instructed his followers to visit him with arms at Kahlur. For this *Hukamnama* see Ganda Singh (ed.) *Hukamname*, (Patiala, 1967), p. 31.
- (36) J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., p. 66
- (37) Man Mohan, *The History of Mandi State* (Lahore, 1930), p. 53.
- (38) At the place where the Guru stayed at Mandi, a Gurdwara has been built wherein three sacred relics of the Guru (a huge makhlaq, and arbab and a cot) are preserved. *Ibid.* p. 53. Archer also mentions about the visit of Guru Gobind Singh to Mandi. W.G. Archer, *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills* (Delhi, 1973).
- (39) Even Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in the early nineteenth century did not touch Mandi though he visited Bilaspur and Kulu. See also *Punjab State Gazetteer*, Mandi State

- (Calcutta, 1908), pp. 391-392; Hutchison and Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, (Simla, 1982). Vol. II. p. 389. For details see also Pratibha Kapur, *Mandi and Neighbouring States (A Study in Political Relationship from 1526-1846)*, H.P. University, M.Phil (History) dissertation, 1980 (unpublished) and Uma Sharma, *Medieval Mandi: A Socio-Political History to 1846*, H.P. University, M.Phil. (History), 1985.(unpublished)
- (40) *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Punjab*, Vol. II (Calcutta, 1908), p. 368; S.S. Charak, *History and Culture of Himalayan States*, Vol. III, (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 62-67.
- (41) J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., pp. 177-80.
- (42) Payne writes: 'It was not long before the growing power of Gobind Singh excited the jealousy of the surrounding hill states, who saw in his teaching and military zeal, a serious menace to their own influence and independence. 'C.H. Payne, *A Short History of the Sikhs* (London,1915), p.102.
- (43) The above campaign had been organised in response to a representation made to emperor Aurangzeb, who directed the *subedar* of Lahore in Nov. 1693 to check the growing power of the Guru. Ever since the arrival of Muazzam in the north west, Bhim Chand had wisely curbed his pretensions of throwing the yoke of Mughal suzerainty; and thereby, he had proved himself to be a faithful vassal of the Mughal empire. J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., pp. 129-30.
- (44) Bhagat Lakshman Singh, op.cit., p.81.
- (45) *Ibid.*, p. 81-83.
- (46) *Ibid.*, p.83.
- (47) For details of the battle see Saina Pat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, Amritsar, 1925: See also J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., Chapter VII: Bhagat Lakshman Singh, op.cit., pp. 88-91.
- (48) It is stated that emperor Aurangzeb awarded a *khilat* and the title of *Raja-i-Rajgan* to Raja Dip Chand whose services were also utilized in the conquest of the fort of Attock. Akshar Singh, op.cit., p.19
- (49) The Sikh traditional accounts would make us believe that the proud Kahlur chief, Bhim Chand, personally went to emperor Aurangzeb in Deccan to apprise the emperor about the Guru's political ambitions. Whether or not a direct representation was made to the emperor, it is known from many Persian histories that the emperor sent orders to some Mughal officials, notably to Wazir Khan, the *Faujdar* of Sirhind. See for example, Ahmad Shah Batalvi's *Tarikh-i-Hind*; Khushwaqt Rai's *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*; Ganesh Das's *Char Bagh-i-Punjab*; and Muhammad Shafi Waris, *Tarikh-i-Chaghai*.
- (50) J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, op.cit., p.137. For more details about the Mughal Sikh relations see R.K. Bhargava, *Punjab and the Hill Rajas*, H.P. University, M.Phil (History) dissertation, 1986.
- (51) Soon after evacuation, the Guru was taken in rear by the Mughal commanders. A desperate battle ensued on the right bank of the stream called Sirsa. Guru Gobind

Singh was able to cross the stream with his two eldest sons and a small number of followers. The two younger sons fell into the hands of the Mughals who were compelled to embrace Islam and on their refusal, were executed at Sirhind on December 27, 1704 A.D. The two elder sons of the Guru died fighting in the battle of Charkaur fought between Wazir Khan of Sirhind and the remaining followers of the Guru.

- (52) For further details see M.R. Chauhan, 'Guru Gobind Singh's Relations with Himachal States', M. Phil (History) dissertation, H.P. University, Simla, 1979; M.S. Ahluwalia, 'Relations of Guru Gobind Singh with the Kahlur chief Bhim Chand' *Somsi*, October, 1976; G.T. Vigne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 139-40.
- (53) H.R. Gupta, *Studies in Later Mughal History of the Punjab* (Lahore, 1944), pp. 46-48
- (54) See for example *Hukamnama* dated 12th December, 1710 A.D. in Ganda Singh (ed.) *Hukamname* (Patiala, 1967), No. 67, pp. 194-95.
- For a detailed biography of Banda Bahadur see Ganda Singh, *Life of Banda Singh Bahadur*, Amritsar, 1935.
- (55) It is estimated that about 1300 were slain in the fight.
- (56) Ganda Singh, *Life of Banda Singh Bahadur* (Amritsar, 1935), pp. 153-54.
- (57) *Ibid.* p.155
- (58) For some miracles connected with the visit of Banda to Kulu and Chamba see Rattan Singh Bhangu, *Pracheen Panth Parkash*, Amritsar, 1962 and M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol.V, (Oxford, 1909), p.19.
- (59) For details about Banda Singh Bahadur's activities in the Himachal Hills see Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*, (Delhi, 1986), pp. 155-64.
- (60) Ganda Singh, *A Brief Account of the Sikh People*, (Delhi, 1971), p.50
- (61) For details about the annexations of Jassa Singh Ramgarhia in the Himachal Hills see, N.K. Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power*, Calcutta, 1973
- (62) Ahmad Shah Batalavi, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, tr. Gurbux Singh (Patiala, 1969), p.54.

A Persian document of Raja Raj Singh's (1764-1794) period informs that the Chamba ruler had placed himself under the protection of the Khalsa Raj and consequently the Chamba chief hopes for a favourable treatment from Gurbaksh Singh (son of Jai Singh Kanhaiya, who remained suzerain of most of the Kangra group of states).

- (63) For a treaty between Raj Singh of Chamba and Amar Singh in Gurmukhi see J. Vogel, *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, (Calcutta, 1909), C, 41, Appendix VIII. Raj Singh of Chamba appears to have suffered insult at the hands

of Amrit Pal of Basohli (Punjab Government Gazetteer, Chamba (1933), p.136) and in order to make his position stronger, he signed accords with the powerful misaldars. Hutchison and Vogel, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 609; G.C. Barnes, *Kangra Settlement Report* (Lahore, 1855), p.10. For the identification of Amar Singh and his association with Jai Singh Kanahiya see also J.S. Grewal and B.N.Goswamy, *The Mughals and the Sikh Rulers and the Vaishnavas of Pindori* (Simla, 1969), pp. 33,34,147,242; See also R.K. Bhargava, *The Punjab and the Hill Rajas*, M.Phil (History) Dissertation, H.P. University, 1986, pp. 146-50

- (64) For details see Navin Sharma, *Medieval Kangra*, Ph.D. Thesis, H.P. University, (unpublished), 1982.
- (65) G.C. Barnes, *Kangra settlement Report* (Lahore, 1855) p.59
- (66) For further details see Navin Sharma, *op.cit.*
- (67) *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*, cited in Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs* (New Delhi, 1978), p.42
- (68) M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *Himachal: Past Present and Future* (Simla, 1975), p.86.
- (69) For further details see chapter on *The Gurkhas and Himachal Pradesh*.
- (70) For a letter in Tankari dt. 1802 A.D. informing about a united front (of the states of Nurpur, Balor, Jasrota, Mankot and Chamba) against Kangra see *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.52; A document in Tankari dt. 7th of the month of Kartika, *Sastram Samvat* 58/1782 A.D. available in Chamba Museum informs that the Rani of Bilaspur (who is also the writer of the letter) sought the help and protection of the Chamba Raja for her infant son Mahan Chand (1778-1824) against Kangra chief. The Rani was evidently, at war with Kangra in 1783, when George Forster travelled through that area. For the text of the document see *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba No. C.29.
- (71) The Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba preserves an undated but a very important letter in Nagri. The letter (probably written between 1806-1809) has been addressed by Amar Singh Thapa and Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Raja Jit Singh of Chamba wherein the Chamba ruler has been advised not to be afraid of the Trigadh. It has further been informed in the above letter that the Katoch forces had seized Palam(pur) but they were driven out by the Gurkhas who also occupied Pathiyar fort. *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.57.
- (72) B.J. Hasrat, *Life and Times of Ranjit singh*, (Hoshiarpur, 1977), p. 52; G.T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir etc.* (London, 1844), Vol. I, p.137
- (73) The country was despoiled. The hill chiefs threw off the Katoch yoke and joined the Gurkhas. Not a blade of cultivation was to be seen, grass grew up in the towns and tigresses whelped in the streets of Nadaun. *Gazetteer of Kangra District* (Lahore, 1904), p. 35
- (74) Jaswant Rao Holkar was then in the Punjab with his army.

- (75) From the British records it appears that Sansar Chand was anxious to place himself under the British protection. See a letter of Sansar Chand to Lord Minto in Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, (Delhi, 1977) Vol. I, p. 232. See also Political Proceedings, 4th May, 1816, No.90.
- (76) According to Ahmad Shah Batalvi's version, Sansar Chand decided to hand over the fort to Sikhs, who were our own countrymen, rather than to the Gurkhas, who were foreigners. In case the Gurkhas took the fort, it would have been difficult to regain the possession. Moreover earlier too the fort had remained in the possession of the Sikhs. William Moorcroft, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.128-30
- (77) Moorcroft, *Travels in the Himalayan Province of Hindustan and the Punjab etc.*, (John Murray, 1837), Vol. I, p.129. See also *Infra* pp. 178-79.
- (78) S.M. Latif, *History of the Punjab* (New Delhi, 1964), p.382.
- (79) That the Sikh domination in the Kangra and its adjoining territories continued after the expulsion of the Gurkhas is known from a number of land-grant documents. See for example a document dated 11 Chet., Sammat 1886/1829 A.D., issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh to one Pt.Jora, conferring a revenue free land, by way of *dharmarth* in the village Marinda (Sujanpur) in the Kangra Valley. For text and translation of this and two other documents see B.N. Goswamy and J.S. Grewal, 'Some Religious Land-grants in Kangra' in K.S. Bedi and S.S. Bal (ed.) *Essays on History, Literature, Art and Culture*, (New Delhi, 1970), pp. 88-97.
- (80) Sardar Desa Singh Majithia continued the administration of the Kangra hills for a long time. He settled down at Guler and conducted official business from there. The Majithia Sardar often mingled with the local hill people and as a sign of love for the area, he married a Kangra girl who later gave birth to his son, Ranjodh Singh. The Majithia Sardar also encouraged the hill artists in the paintings of the Sikhs and soon the Guler artists began to paint the Sikh portraits in Guler style. W.G. Archer, *Paintings of the Sikhs*, p.19.
- (81) For details see *Infra*, pp 162-63.
- (82) M.S. Ahluwalia, 'The relations of Ranjit Singh etc.' in *The Panjab Past and Present*, Patiala, Oct. 1980, p.161
- (83) 'Raja Sansar Chand is a tall well formed man of about sixty. His son Anirudh Chand has a very handsome face. He (Sansar Chand) is now poor and in danger of being wholly subjected to Ranjit Singh.' William Moorcroft, op.cit., pp. 75-76.
- (84) Anirudh Chand, the successor of Sansar Chand, visited Lahore in 1828 A.D., where Ranjit Singh demanded the hand of his sister in marriage for his favourite, Hira Singh, son of Raja Dhian Singh. The young Rajput chief of Kangra pretended to agree, but on returning to the hills safely, he refused to submit to the disgrace of marrying the Katoch princess to a Rajput of Jammu. He sought the British protection first at Arki and then Haridwar. At Haridwar he married the princess to the Raja of Garhwal. The same year he died and Ranjit Singh annexed Nadaun. The Maharaja himself married two of the daughters of Raja Sansar Chand at Jwala Mukhi. S.M. Latif, op.cit., p. 441; J.D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, (London, 1849), p.168

- (85) Hutchison and Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, (Simla, 1982), Vol. I, p.321; Khushwant Singh, op.cit., Vol. I, p.217.
- (86) M.S. Ahluwalia, 'The Relations of Ranjit Singh etc.' in the *Punjab Past and Present*, Oct. 1980, p.163
- (87) Wazir Nathu of Chamba was granted certain villages as *jagir* through a *Sanad* issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, dt. 1st Har, V.S. 1881. For the text of the Sanad see *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.60
- (88) A letter in Persian with seal in Gurmukhi from Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Raja Charhat Singh (1808-1844 A.D.), informs that the Maharaja was pleased to know that Rihlu fort and the *ilaqa*, had been handed over to the Sikhs. In exchange for Rihlu, the Maharaja confers the state of Bhadarwah on Chamba. The tribute money from Chamba to the Sikhs is also remitted. The letter is dated 27th Jeth, Vikrama 1878 (1821 A.D.) See *Catalogue, Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.59
- (89) Hutchison and Vogel, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p.263.
- (90) In the later half of 1816, Raja Bir Singh was at Ludhiana, plotting with Shah Shuja, the exiled Amir of Kabul, against Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- (91) G.T. Vigne, who travelled through Nurpur in June, 1835, and again in the spring of 1839, met Bir Singh at Chamba and has written about the chief's anxiety to regain his ancestral territory. He even requested Mr. Vigne to plead his case before the King or the East India Coy. G.T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh etc.* (London, 1844), Vol. I, pp. 157-58. See also George Forster, *op.cit.*, Vo. I., p.234
- (92) L.H. Griffin, *The Rajas of Punjab* (Patiala, 2970), p.640.
- (93) A Persian document dated 1st Poh, V.S. 1891, bearing the seal of Maharaja Ranjit Singh refers to Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, the *Subedar* of Kangra and also informs about the grant of a village as *jagir* to the latter. For text of the Sanad see *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.61. For a parwana in Persian of Maharaja Ranji Singh to Lehna Singh Majithia, then governor of Kangra, granting a village to the son of Wazir Nathu of Chamba see *Catalogue Bhuri Singh Museum*, Chamba, No. C.65.
- (94) William Moorcroft while travelling to Leh was stopped at Mandi by the Sikh forces who did not allow him to proceed further without permission of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- (95) M.S. Ahluwalia, *op.cit.*, p.166, B.C. Hugel, *op.cit.*, p.29.
- (96) The only exception were the hill states of Nalagarh, Bilaspur (partly), Sirmur and Simla Hills, which came under the British protection on account of the Nepalese war of 1816 A.D. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, p.148.
- (97) For details see M.S. Ahluwalia, 'The Relations of Ranjit Singh with the Hill Chiefs of Himachal' in Ganda Singh (ed.) *The Punjab Past and Present*, Patiala, October, 1980, pp. 156-167. See also R.K. Bhargave, *op.cit.*, and Tek Chand Rana, *Lahore Durbar and Himachal Chiefs*, M.Phil (History) dissertation (unpublished), 1979.

CHAPTER - VI

**THE GURKHAS
AND
THE BRITISH**

THE GURKHAS AND THE HIMACHAL HILLS

THE BRITISH ANNEXATION AND HIMACHAL

CHAPTER - VI

THE GURKHAS AND THE BRITISH

A. THE GURKHAS AND THE HIMACHAL HILLS

INTRODUCTION

On the decline of the Mughal empire, the Gurkhas¹ of Nepal, having made themselves masters of the whole of that country, conceived an ambitious military programme of bringing the entire western Himalayas under their sway. In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Narbhupal Shan ascended the throne. He was the tenth ruler of the Gurkhas starting from Dravya Shah. He was a very ambitious and courageous man. He found that eastward from his mountain home lay the prosperous valley of Nepal which was divided at that time amongst the three principalities of Bhatgaon, Kathmandu and Patan.²

Prithvi Narayan Shah, who ascended the Nepal throne in 1742 A.D., turned his organising power and will to the task of militarising his people. He patronised the hardy mountaineers around his town and formed an army more numerous and better-led than any of those of his neighbours commanded. With the assistance of many other mountain chiefs, Prithvi Narayan Shah gained possession of all the mountainous regions which surrounded the valley of Nepal.³

By the close of the eighteenth century, Nepal ruler Bahadur Shah sent the Gurkha army under the command of Damodar Pandey towards the west and the various principalities were conquered one after the other and before 1787, all the Chaubisi principalities were absorbed by the Gurkhas. In 1790 A.D., the Nepal ruler planned the invasion of Kumaon and sent the forces under the command of Amar Singh Thapa and others, who took possession of Almora after defeating its chief. In the following year, the Gurkhas made great preparations for the invasion of Garhwal. The Gurkhas, however, never penetrated beyond Langur Garh, which for a whole year defied their efforts to reduce it. Meanwhile, the news of a Chinese assault on the Gurkha possessions in Nepal obliged the Gurkha troops to retreat. However, the Gurkhas had so impressed the Garhwal ruler with a sense of their power, that he agreed to pay a yearly tribute to the Nepal government.

In 1803 A.D., the Gurkhas made another massive attempt westwards. Their soldiers were now sent towards Garhwal under the command of Amar Singh Thapa and others. Pradyuman Shah, the weak Garhwal chief, retired to Dehra Dun without opposing the Gurkhas. The Gurkhas however, followed him to Dehra Dun and forced him to seek refuge in the plains. In the battle that followed, the Garhwal chief was killed (1804) and his brother retired to Kangra. The Gurkhas now established themselves as far as the Yamuna in the west.⁴

In 1805, the Gurkhas got another opportunity for expansion. Between the Sutlej and Yamuna were a number of petty chiefs trying to impose authorities over one and other. The ambition of Raja Sansar Chand in particular, had already made his neighbours either into his vassals or his enemies. He had conquered the land of the chief of Bilaspur. Raja Sansar Chand's action against the Kahlur aroused keen resentment among the other Hill States and smarting under the many wrongs they had endured at his hands, as well as fearing for their own possessions, the chiefs formed a coalition against Raja Sansar Chand. They sent a united invitation, through the Raja of Kahlur, to the Gurkha Commander, Amar Singh Thapa, to invade Kangra.⁵

The hill chiefs further promised to aid Amar Singh Thapa, with their own contingents whenever the latter crossed the Sutlej. Their invitation was wholly acceptable to the Gurkhas, for it was in keeping with their expansionist designs. Thus it was the small state of Kahlur

which provided Amar Singh Thapa with the opportunity he sought. Accordingly, with an army of 40,000 men, Amar Singh Thapa crossed the Sutlej at Bilaspur where he was joined by the various contingents from the hill states of the Kangra group, the Bilaspur troops and Basohli, whose united forces numbered about 10,000. Along with the forces of other states, Chamba sent a force to assist the Gurkhas, under the command of Wazir Nathu.⁶

The Gurkha forces then advanced into the heart of the Kangra state and laid siege to the fort, where Raja Sansar Chand had taken refuge. The fort was invested for four years, but all the efforts of the Gurkhas met with no success. The continuous siege of the fort greatly effected the agriculture and economy of the surrounding territories. For four years, the Gurkhas plundered and laid waste the country.⁷

For more than three years, this state of anarchy continued. In the fertile valley of Kangra 'not a blade of cultivation was to be seen, grass grew up in the streets of Nadaun.' Meanwhile, the supplies were smuggled in from Palam, but the Gurkhas cut these off by blockading the river gate of entrance into the fort, and the Raja and the garrison were without food and subsisted for four months upon little else than the leaves of vegetables.

At last as a last resort, Raja Sansar Chand, in 1809 A.D., appealed to Maharaja Ranjit Singh for help. Sansar Chand, it is said had already rejected one offer of aid from Maharaja Ranjit Singh, out of preference for a treaty with the Nepal ruler. However, the continued siege by the Gurkhas, left no chance for Sansar Chand to withdraw from the fort of Kangra with some semblance of dignity. Seeing no hope of relief from the misery and distress which had come upon his country, Sansar Chand sent his brother to Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Lahore to ask for his help. This was readily promised but on the condition that the Kangra fort should be surrendered.⁸

In May 1809 A.D., Maharaja Ranjit Singh marched from Lahore. Meanwhile Sansar Chand also reached Jwala Mukhi in disguise to conclude the treaty with Ranjit Singh. For nearly a month, negotiations went on at Jwala Mukhi between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Sansar Chand, regarding the conditions on which help should be given. The Maharaja demanded the surrender of the fort before proceeding to expell

the Gurkhas but Sansar Chand declined to agree. At length, by the mediation of Wazir Nathu (of Chamba) and the Raja of Guler, an agreement was reached. The two rulers met inside the temple of Jwala Mukhi, Sansar Chand made the treaty⁹ with Ranjit Singh, signed (it is said), in blood, whereas the Maharaja, with his hand over the sacred flame, took an oath to do him no harm.

Meanwhile, Amar Singh Thapa, on coming to know the presence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, offered a large sum of wealth to Ranjit Singh, if he withdrew his army. However, Ranjit Singh had an eye on the Kangra fort. According to the agreement, he defeated the Gurkhas who retreated across the Sutlej.¹⁰ Ranjit Singh moved on to the fort of Kangra in the month of August, and to guarantee the cooperation of Sansar Chand, he took Sansar Chand's son as hostage. The Gurkhas were in no position to check Ranjit Singh's advance. They were forced to withdraw to the left bank of the Sutlej and Amar Singh Thapa returned to his headquarters with a grievance against the Sikhs.¹¹

After his retirement from Kangra in 1809 A.D., Amar Singh Thapa put his pressure against the Raja of Hindur (Nalagarh) but the advance of the British troops that year to Ludhiana saved Palasia from being captured. Amar Singh Thapa now established himself at Arki, in the small state of Baghal, whose chief was driven into exile. Sometime afterwards Amar Singh sent a force under his son Ranjor Singh to attack Sirmur. Its ruler Karam Parkash was defeated and fled. Thus Nahan and Jythak (in Sirmur) became important Gurkha posts in the years immediately ahead.¹²

By the year 1810, the Gurkhas had conquered Hindur, Jubbal and Pundar. After some resistance, the fort of Nagana, belonging to the Thakur of Balson, was also captured. At this juncture, the Thakurs of Kotgarh, Balson, Theog and other petty states, requested the Bushahr chief for help against the growing menace of the Gurkhas. The Raja of Bushahr, foreseeing a threat to his own state, despatched a strong force of 10,000 under his *wazir* to check the Gurkha advance.

In May 1811, Amar Singh Thapa marched personally from Sabathu with a large force. He captured Nagana and advanced on to the valley of the middle Sutlej, near Rampur, the capital of the state of Bushahr.

Meanwhile, the untimely death of Ugar Singh, the chief of Bushahr, eased the task of Amar Singh Thapa, who took advantage of the minority of the new ruler, Mohinder Singh and marching with a large force took possession of Rampur Bushahr. The *Rajmata*, with her infant son took shelter in the deep forests. Amar Singh Thapa took possession of Rampur and remained there with his forces. It was only in 1812 that Amar Singh Thapa, perhaps finding his possessions too remote, agreed to leave the Rampur prince all the country north of Sarahan mountains and beyond the Sutlej in return for payment of a tribute of Rs. 12,000/- annually. Thus the Gurkha conquest of the country between Yamuna and Sutlej was complete.¹³

ANGLO-GURKHA CONFLICT AND THE HIMACHAL HILLS

Amar Singh Thapa remained with his forces at Rampur till at least up to 1813 A.D. after which he retired to Arki, his earlier headquarters. Shortly afterwards he was to face a new challenge from the British who finally succeeded in defeating the Gurkhas and stripping them of all their possessions in the Himachal hills. The conflicting interests of the Gurkhas and the English made an 'open appeal to arms inevitable.' The English decided to expell the Gurkhas from all the Hill States east to the Sutlej, with the help of the local chiefs.

As the hill chiefs were already fed up with the incessant inroads of the Gurkhas, they immediately consented to extend all help to the British. The British, on their part, promised the hill chieftains, the restoration of their lost territories soon after the expulsion of the Gurkhas. A joint military operation was planned under the command of Major General David Ochterlony.¹⁴

David Ochterlony entered the foot hills of the Himalayas in the direction of Nalagarh which surrendered on 5th November, 1814. This was followed by the surrender of Taragarh, a small hill fortress in the neighbourhood. These were garrisoned by the British and a depot was established at Nalagarh.¹⁵ Meanwhile, Amar Singh Thapa was also determined to resist the British advancement in the region. He moved with his whole force from his headquarters at Arki and took up a position on a lofty and almost inaccessible ridge of mountains which was defended by several forts of considerable strength.¹⁶

The chief of Bilaspur, whose territory lay on both sides of Sutlej,

was an ally of great importance to Amar Singh Thapa as nearly all the supplies of Amar Singh's army were drawn from Bilaspur territory. Apart from this, Arki, his former headquarters, supplied the rest of his communications with the other positions. An attempt was made by Ochterlony to attack Amar Singh's position at Ramgarh, but the Gurkhas attacked with great force and consequently the British forces led by Lieut. Col. Thompson, Major Macleod and others suffered considerable loss.¹⁷

Ochterlony, who had now been promoted as a Major General, changed his strategy and decided to place himself between the principal position of the Gurkhas and Bilaspur, in order to cut off the supplies. He succeeded in winning over the local chief to his side and with his aid constructed a road from Khandri to Nahar. Amar Singh promptly countered this by abandoning all his posts on that ridge. General Ochterlony, therefore, marched on 16th January, 1815¹⁸ with the reserve across the Gambar river to a position on the road to Arki. Lt. Col. Cooper was left with a battalion at the former post of Nahar.

Being hard pressed, Amar Singh Thapa quit his position for Malaon and left only small garrisons in Ramgarh and other outposts of that range. The British, however, with their superior forces and shelling power, were able to reduce many important Gurkha posts such as Ramgarh, Jorjori and the fort of Taragarh.

Apart from the Himachal front, the British, soon after the declaration of the war against the Gurkhas (Nov. 1st, 1814) also started military operations in other parts of the Himalayas. Four separate divisions of troops were put into operation in different areas. The principal columns were under Major General Rollo Gillespie and Major General Ochterlony. Gillespie moved from Saharanpur to Dehra Dun and Kiarda Dun. When Bal Bhadra Thapa, (the commander of the Gurkha forces at Dehra Dun) heard of the approach of the British army, he abandoned Dun and moved to a small fort of Kalanga, which was besieged by the British. Several attempts were made to reduce the fort. In one of the attempts Major general Gillespie was mortally wounded. However Major Mawbey, was finally able to capture the fort.¹⁹

British army reaches Nahan

After the capture of Kalanga fort, the British army was directed

to advance forward towards Sirmur and to reduce Nahan, its capital. The territory at that time was under the control of the Gurkhas, under the command of Ranjor Singh Thapa, son of Amar Singh Thapa. On the approach of the British forces Ranjor Singh abandoned Nahan and took up position at Jythak, on a ridge overlooking Nahan.²⁰

The British army under Major General Martindell,²¹ reached Nahan on 19th December, 1814. Nahan was occupied on the Christmas day of 1814 and soon after that, preparations were made to attack Ranjor Singh's position at Jythak. Gen. Martindell sent out two strong detachments to attack Jythak from north and south. Both the contingents were however, defeated and driven back with heavy losses.²² Consequently for more than a month, Martindell did not dare to confront the Gurkha forces again.

Meanwhile the Britishers acquainted themselves with the sentiments of the inhabitants of the northern districts, particularly of those of the Jubbal. By February 1815, Fraser, the Political Agent, learnt that the elders of Jubbal were at last stirring up and needed arms and men. An irregular army which was sent towards Jubbal, was joined by two chief men of the state, Dangi Wazir and Primoo.²³

The British irregulars, joined by the forces of Dangi and Primoo, surrounded the small fortress of Chopal, which at that time was one of the strong holds of Jubbal and was garrisoned by about one hundred Gurkhas. A negotiation was initiated by the British party with the commander of the fort; and after some demure and threat, he surrendered with his party and all were received into the British pay, according to capitulation.²⁴

Gradually the British forces were increased to about 800 irregulars. Many soldiers were recruited from the State of Jubbal by Wazir Dangi. The entire force now was directed against the petty forts of the enemy in the north, in alliance with the troops of the Raja of Kulu, who also joined these troops and commenced operations against the Gurkhas.²⁵

After reducing capital,²⁶ the combined forces of the British and the Jubbalians marched towards the Rawingarh fort,²⁷ on the banks of river Pabar. Rawingarh was another strong-hold of the Gurkhas, under the command of Ranjor Thapa. In the siege of Rawingarh, the British

forces were assisted by the two *wazirs* of Bushahr, Tikam Das and Badri Das, apart from the *wazir* of Jubbal, who had earlier assisted in the reduction of Chopal. After the conquest of Rawingarh, it was occupied by the Fraser's irregulars.²⁹

In the north, the Gurkha forces, under the command of Kirti Rana, were occupying Hattu range. The Bushahr troops led by *wazirs* Tikam Das and Badri Das, were joined by the Kulu forces in 1815. The joint forces hard pressed Kirti Rana and surrounded him at Sarau-ka-Tibba. On the evening of next day, he surrendered to the *wazirs* of Bushahr on the condition that the lives of his forces were to be spared and they were to be handed over to the nearest British General. It is stated that Kirti Rana was compelled to surrender due to the treachery of his other troops stationed at Sirmur, Garhwal and Kumaon.

The whole campaign proved to be completely successful and Gen. Ochterlony was able to compel the Gurkha Amar Singh Thapa to sign a treaty at Sagauli on 28th Nov. 1815. It will thus be seen that Amar Singh Thapa had steadfastly refused to listen to the solicitations of his followers, and submit. However, the news of the fall of Kumaon and some desertions in his army left him with no choice but to surrender. A convention was thus entered into, by which Amar Singh Thapa and his son Kazi Ranjor Singh Thapa (who was then defending the fort of Jythak against Major Gen. Martindell's force) were to be allowed to return with their followers and private properties to Nepal leaving all the rest of the hill country, from Kali to Sutlej, in the hands of the British.³⁰

B. THE BRITISH ANNEXATION AND HIMACHAL

After the conclusion of the Anglo-Gurkha War in 1815 A.D., twenty³² Simla Hill States passed under the British paramountcy. As already stated, the British had promised to the hill states, the restoration of their territories after the expulsion of the Gurkhas. It was on this promise that the hill states had given all the required assistance to the British in defeating the Gurkhas. To begin with, the British appeared to be less interested in acquiring the hill states and with this end in view, a conference of the hill chiefs under General Ochterlony was held at Plassia.³³

As a result of this conference the territories held by each chief

prior to the Gurkha occupation, was determined. After negotiations, possessions of many chiefs were approved and confirmed. The chiefs whose states were restored to them included Sirmur, Bilaspur, Hindur, Jubbal, Bhagat, Keonthal, Kotkhai, Baghal and Bushahr. The chiefs of these states were granted *sanads*, which thus came under the British overlordship between 1815 and 1819 A.D.³⁴ It appears that the exigencies of their position to submit to a more powerful neighbour, the superior chief was recognised as the overlord of the inferior ones.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the *thakurais* of Kumarsin, Balson, Kuthar, Tharoch, Mangal and Dhami were constituted as separate chiefships and granted independent *sanads*, while the *thakurais* of Khaneti and Delath were conferred upon Bushahr and those of Koti, Madhan, Ghund, Theog and Ratesh upon Keonthal.³⁵

THE GRANT OF SANADS TO HILL CHIEFS

The British granted *sanads* to the chiefs of the Shimla hills to confer lands upon their legitimate chiefs in perpetuity, 'from generation to generation and with all internal rights'. In lieu of these grants, the *rajas* of the Shimla region were required by the British government to fulfil some obligations and conditions.

The hill chiefs, after their submission were granted *sanads* through which they were given their hereditary lands. It is interesting to note that as the Mughals did not, in general resume the lands of the chiefs, the British also did not try to resume the lands of the chiefs in Himachal.³⁶ As under the Mughals, the chiefs were required to give military assistance, whenever the British asked for it.

One of the most important conditions laid down in the *sanads* to the chiefs who submitted during the period 1815-19 A.D., pertained to the issue of *begar*. Out of the twenty states, sixteen were asked to supply *begarees* to the British government³⁷. The number of these *begarees* differed from the highest range of hundred to the lowest of five.

Apart from the supply of the *begarees*, the princely states of Himachal, which came under the domination of the British Paramount Power, were also required to pay the *nazrana* or *peshkash* in cash³⁸. The British government also kept the right to overthrow any heir from his

throne if he was found to be a faulter in the fulfilment of the obligations laid down in the *sanads*. It was also necessary for the new chief of any state to get the recognition from the British Government³⁹. The chiefs of Himachal Pradesh were also required to promote the welfare of their people, to improve the conditions of their lands and cultivation, to redress grievances and to keep the public roads safe. The Rajas of trans-Sutlej states were required by the British Government to keep the traders and bankers secure within their territories. In the *sanads* that were granted during 1846-48, we find this obligation among the important ones prescribed by the British Government⁴⁰.

It is also worth noting that no Raja was given the right to settle conflicts with any other Raja. If any time, the conflict arose between two or more Rajas, the Rajas of these trans-Sutlej States were required to seek arbitration of the British courts⁴¹. Again, the military assistance was one of the important obligations laid down in the *sanads*, under which every chief was required to supply his sepoys and soldiers to the British government⁴².

Consolidation of the British Rule

After the revolt of 1857, a new series of *sanads* were issued by the British Government to the erstwhile princely States of Himachal Pradesh. The only difference we find after 1857 is that this time no state was brought under the British paramountcy. The *sanads* during 1857-1929 were issued to those twenty three states which were already under the protection of the British Government. The *sanads* of this period vary from that of the earlier ones which were issued during the period from 1815 to 1848. The *sanads* of the period included issues like grant of territories, annexation of lands, postal conventions, grants of titles and *khilats* etc⁴³.

Change in the British Policy

It may be recalled that the hill chiefs of Himachal Pradesh had extended all help to the British in the Anglo-Gurkha War, with the hope that their lost territories would be restored soon after the expulsion of the Gurkhas. However, once the British gained a foothold in the Himachal, they changed their policy even though they had given certain guarantees to the hill chiefs through the *sanads* issued to them. No doubt, the rulers

of Bhagal, Hindur, Bilaspur, Bushahr and Sirmur, which had come partly or wholly under the Gurkha rule, were restored to their legitimate rulers. But a complete restoration of their territories was not permitted.

In accordance with their changed policy, the British retained possession of some of the important portions under the pretext that they were compelled to do so in the interest of the hill chiefs to enable them to maintain their guarantee of protection not only against the foreign enemy but to retain these chiefs in their territories also. The British Government thus modified the original policy and was determined to retain some of the favourable military positions⁴³.

Territorial Aggression

The British restored most of the lands to their legitimate heirs but in some cases, some portions of lands were resumed from their chiefs. In case of Raja Mohinder Singh of Bushahr, the Govt. retained the forts of Rawin, Salgan, Hattu and Baghee, with the lands attached to them, through the *sanad* dated 8th February, 1816⁴⁴.

The British Government issued peculiar types of *sanads* to those rulers from whom some portions of their territories were taken possession by the Government. In these *sanads*, the Government mentioned only the territories which were restored to the Rajas and not the portions of territories which were consumed by the Government as in cases of the states of Keonthal and Baghat.⁴⁵

The British, through two *sanads*, dated 6th Sept., 1815 and 11th Sept., conferred on the Raja of Keonthal, the *parganah* of Collhanj, Bethook, Gootee, Khond, Kyaree and eight other *parganahs*. It is clear from these *sanads* that there were some other *parganahs* also which previously were parts of the Keonthal State and which were not given to the Raja through these *sanads*. However, the names of the territories that were taken hold of by the Government, were not given⁴⁶.

In case of Rana Mohinder Singh, the Raja of Baghat, the British, through a *sanad* of 4th September, 1815, conferred the 'Pergunnahs Kusowlee, Bhooj, Bewal and Golee Masil'. It was also laid down that, he must be cautious in not encroaching beyond the ancient and fixed boundaries of the aforesaid our Pergunnahs any of the other Pergunnah⁴⁸.

It is clear from the *sanad* that previously the Raja of Bhagat had some more lands and only some of them were restored to him by the British and those which were consumed were not mentioned in the *sanad*.

From the Raja of Sirmur, Raja Fateh Singh also, the British took hold of some territories. A *sanad* dated 21st Sept., 1815 A.D.,⁴⁹ was granted to him through which the Government detached some land namely, the forts of Monee and Juggatgarh and Dun Kyadrah and the districts of Jaunsar and Banwar Moolakee⁴⁹.

Thus we find that although on the British Government granted the thakuraees on the legitimate heirs 'in perpetuity', if the raja of any thakurai failed to fulfil the conditions like giving military assistance, constructing roads, improving conditions of people and cultivation and try to encroach upon the territories of others, the British were at liberty to dispossess him and in his place settle any other male member of the royal family⁵⁰.

The Anglo-Gurkha War no doubt helped in the restoration of the hill states to their legitimate rulers, but still the hill chiefs continued resenting and complaining against the occupation of some of their territory by the British as is evident from the correspondence between the Political Agent and the hill chiefs of Sirmur and Keonthal etc., during this period⁵¹.

HIMACHAL AND THE BRITISH : 1815-1845

After the conclusion of the Anglo-Gurkha War, the British, as noted above, guaranteed independence to the hill chiefs in their internal affairs as well as security against foreign aggression. Gradually, the British departed from this practice in several ways. This departure from the declared policy was stated to be due to mis-rule, oppression of the people and non-fulfilment of the terms of the treaties and *sanads* by the hill chiefs⁵².

Meanwhile the British acquired a few footholds, particularly in the Shimla Hill States or the territory east of the Sutlej. The hill chiefs, during this period, were mostly busy either settling their own internal affairs and conflicts with the native rulers of dealing with the Sikhs and their occasionally undesirable and exorbitant demands for tribute or

marriages. The relations of the British with the Hill States during the period 1815-1845 A.D. centered mainly around issues like complaints about the retention of territory; exchange or aquisition of territory; asylum to the hill chiefs; intervention on the side of the hill rulers; problems of succession and the British intervention and secret communications with the British⁵³.

(i) COMPLAINTS

After the conclusion of the Anglo-Gurkha War in 1815, the British had to deal with conflicts or complaints arising out of the hill territory retained by them after the war. This is known from the correspondence between Sir George Russell Clerk, Political Agent of Ambala and Ludhiana and the ruler of the State of Sirmur.

The British Government annexed the Kiadra valley from Sirmur to meet the expenses of the British troops stationed at Nahan. On January 5, 1820, the Raja of Sirmur appealed to the Governor General for the restoration of Jaunsar-Bawar, Kalsi and Kiadra Dun to him⁵⁴. The Governor General asked George Russell Clerk to report officially on the Raja's offer to take the Kiadra valley and also give a history of the management⁵⁵.

The proposal of the Raja was turned down after a series of correspondence and consideration between the Political Agent and the Government of India, in so far as the *parganas* of Jaunsar and Bawar were concerned. However, the British agreed to the cession of Kiadra Dun valley and George Russell Clerk was authorised to transfer the Kiadra Dun 'in full and perpetual sovereignty' to the Raja of Sirmur⁵⁶ in September, 1833 through a *sanad*.

The Raja of Sirmur, Fateh Parkash also laid claim to the territories of Jubbal, Utraj, Ramgarh, Pundar, Morni, Pinjor, Humer and Ganjari. However, his claim to most of these territories was not accepted and these were allowed to be occupied by their respective chiefs⁵⁷.

(ii) ACQUISITION OR EXCHANGE

The British Government soon modified its original policy with a view to retain some favourable hill areas with them. They acquired

some territory for forming the hill station of Simla, exchanged some areas with the rulers of Keonthal and Patiala. In 1863-64, Solan was acquired as a rifle practice ground for troops stationed in the hills on a payment of Rs.500 per annum from the ruler of Bhagat.

(iii) ASYLUM TO THE HILL CHIEFS

The British also came into contact with the hill rulers when the latter fled to the British territories because of the fear of the Sikhs or some other reasons. Raja Bir Singh, for instance, refused to compromise his honour and had to leave the state of Nurpur and sought refuge ultimately in the British territory at Simla and Sabathu. Similarly, Charhat Singh, when expelled from his principality by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, sought asylum in the British dominions across Sutlej. The ruler of Mandi, Raja Balbir Sen, also wrote to Col. Tapp, Political Agent at Sabathu, when Ranjit Singh sent forces against him.

(iv) BRITISH INTERVENTION

The British at times found opportunity to intervene on behalf of the hill chiefs for restoration of their *jagirs* or withdrawal of the external forces from a particular state. In 1833 A.D., after the death of Anirudh Chand of Kangra (who had fled to the British territory after having refused to marry off his sister to the son of Raja Dhian Singh), it was at the request of the British Government (conveyed through Col. Wade at Ludhiana) that Maharaja Ranjit Singh recalled his two sons, Ranbir Chand and Parmod Chand Katoch and granted them a *jagir* of Rs. 50,000 in Mahal Morian. Again, it was on the intervention of the British that the Sikh forces sent by Maharaja Ranjit Singh (under Desa Singh Majithia) were withdrawn from Bilaspur⁵⁹.

(v) SUCCESSION ISSUE

The British also, at times, intervened in the issue of succession. The British intervened in the affairs of the State of Bilaspur during the rule of Raja Kharak Chand. Their intervention covered two aspects: (1) improvement of administration⁶⁰, and (2) Succession issue⁶⁰. Similarly on the demise of Raja Ajit Singh of Kulu, Erskine, the Superintendent of Shimla Hill States, made an inquiry into the succession of the fief of Shangri. Apart from this the principle of escheat was applied in case of

the states of Bhagat and Jubbal, which were, however restored to Mohinder Singh and Puran Chand respectively, on the report of Sir George Russel Clerk in 1842.

(vi) SECRET COMMUNICATIONS

Occassionally, the British also came into contact with the hills chiefs when the latter sent secret letters to them. In 1845 A.D., when the Sikh forces frightened Raja Balbir Sen of Mandi and Raja Ugar Sen of Suket, they (the Rajas) sent a confidential agent to Mr. Erskine, Superintendent of the Shimla Hill States, tendering their allegiance to the British Government. They also appealed to the British to give them protection against the Sikh invasion. As a result of their request, Mr. Erskine visited Bilaspur where the two chiefs confirmed their allegiance personally to the British on 21st February, 1846.⁶¹

HIMACHAL AFTER THE ANGLO-SIKH WARS

By the middle of the eighteen twenties, the British had become the undisputed masters of India. The only parts of the country yet lying outside their jurisdiction were Sind and Punjab. From 1826 A.D. onwards, although the British policy towards Maharaja Ranjit Singh began to change outwardly, every respect continued to be shown for the treaty of Amritsar, 1809.⁶²

Henceforth, a feeling began to grow in certain sections of the British officialdom that 'Ranjit Singh had become master of the Punjab almost unheeded by the English.'⁶⁴ Captain Murray, British Political Agent at Ludhiana till 1823 and thereafter British Political Agent at Ambala, was guided by some such motivation when he advocated that Ranjit Singh was not to be permitted to strengthen his hold south of the river Sutlej.⁶⁴ As his hands were always tied with one problem or the other, Ranjit Singh had to deal with the British pressures under extremely tight circumstances. When the final crisis arose, he was already a weak and dying man. The situation further deteriorated under his weak successors.⁶⁵

After the death of Ranjit Singh (1839 A.D.), the Sikhs fought with the British at Mudki and Ferozshah in December, 1845 A.D., at Aliwal in January 1846, and at Sabraon in February, 1846 A.D.⁶⁶

The rulers of the hill states of Himachal, were tired of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's policy of annexation and extinction. They, therefore, sympathised with the English. They were in fact looking for an opportunity to regain their lost territories from the Sikhs, and some of them even entered into secret correspondence with the British.

In the autumn of 1845, when the Sikh forces invaded the British territory by crossing the Sutlej some of the hill chiefs joined on the side of the English and rendered valuable support to them in expelling the Sikhs from the territories or posts earlier held by them.⁶⁸ The other rulers however, did not join the British either due to their internal problems or due to lack of will and resources.

THE TREATY OF LAHORE (1846) AND HIMACHAL

The last battle between the Sikhs and the British was fought at the battle-field of Sabraon in February, 1846, in which the former were defeated. On March 9, 1846,⁶⁹ a treaty of peace was signed between the English and the Khalsa Durbar by which all the Sikh territories below the Sutlej and between the Beas and Sutlej were annexed. A huge war indemnity was imposed on the Sikhs, a part of which was paid by ceding to the British, the hill districts between the Beas and the Indus including Kashmir and Hazara.

The hill chiefs of Himachal, after the conclusion of the Anglo-Sikh War, expected a generous treatment from the British which was earlier accorded to them on the conclusion of the Anglo-Gurkha War. However, this was not to be so. Soon after the conclusion of the Anglo-Sikh War, the British did not restore the ceded hill territories to their legitimate chiefs and instead retained the portion between Sutlej and Ravi as their own territory. The rest were restored to Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu. Thus the hill states of Kangra, Guler, Jaswan, Datarpur, Nurpur, Suket, Mandi, Kulu and Lahul and Spiti, came under the British control.

In the State of Bilaspur, Raja Jagat Chand was confirmed in the possession of the territory on the right bank of Sutlej⁷⁰. Raja Narain Singh of Kutlehr was 'awarded a life grant of Rs. 10,000 in addition to the *jagir* of a like value, and it was afterwards confirmed to his heirs in perpetuity, subject to a *nazrana* of Rs. 1188.'

The period between 1846 and 1857 A.D., may thus be termed

as a period of expansion of British rule in Himachal Pradesh. Under the terms of the treaties the hill states were restored to their rightful chiefs, who in turn were required to fulfil some obligations and conditions in lieu of this favour. Some of the conditions and obligations vary from the conditions laid down in the treaties signed during the period between the Anglo-Gurkha War and the Anglo-Sikh War, but some were similar in nature⁷⁰.

The chief of Nalagarh, Raja Ram Singh, was granted a *sanad* on 29th October, 1846. Through this *sanad*, the British Government gave him the fort of Malaon, with its dependent villages and two guns and ammunition. He was the only cis-Sutlej chief who showed loyalty to the British by waiting on the Governor-General at Sarai Lashkari Khan, on the eve of the Anglo-Sikh War.

The British Government conferred the lands of Suket on Raja Ugar Sen, the chief of Suket state, as a token of friendship in recognition of his loyalty towards the British. The Raja was to have all the administrative powers within his boundaries⁷². The Raja of Chamba, Raja Sri Singh, was also granted the territories of Chamba by the Government. However, in case of Chamba, a different type of problem cropped up with the transfer of territory to the Raja of Jammu.

The river Ravi divides the state of Chamba into two parts. It was to be decided whether the British were to include, the whole of the state in the transfer or only the portion to the west of Ravi. Finally, an agreement was reached by which ' Gulab Singh acquired *taluqa* Lakhanpur in exchange for the cis-Ravi portion, and Chamba surrendered all claim to Bhadarwah, on condition that the territory to east of Ravi should be restored, thus preserving the ancient integrity of the state⁷³.

According to the new *sanads* which were issued by the British during the period from 1846 to 1857 to five states, three were asked to pay *nazrana*⁷⁴. Raja Balbir sen of Mandi Raja Sri Singh of Chamba and Raja Ugar Sen of Suket were asked to pay annual tributes. However, the Rajas of Bilaspur and Nalagarh were exempted from the payments of *nazrana*. It was perhaps because both these states were already under the British protection from the time of the Anglo-Gurkha War, i.e. 1815 A.D.

DISAFFECTION GROWS AMONG KANGRA HILL CHIEFS

The British policy of retaining the territories of the Kangra group of states, led to great disappointment as the hill chiefs of these territories had expected that after the conclusion of the Anglo-Sikh War, their territories would be restored to them. It is therefore, not surprising to find that during the Second Anglo-Sikh War, these states became anti-British in their attitudes and some even openly supported the cause of the Sikhs⁷⁵.

Thus, soon after the conclusion of the Anglo-Sikh wars, we find a shift in the British attitude towards the hill chiefs. Instead of having a casual and intermittent relationship, the British now got themselves consolidated as the paramount power. The salient features of the British overlordship included granting of *sanads* through which the hill chiefs were given possession over their lands but were required to fulfil certain obligations. These included payment of *nazrana*, military assistance and supply of *begarees* etc. Henceforth their rights to settle their own conflicts ceased and they were required to seek British arbitration regarding and dispute over their territories or succession issues etc⁷⁶

TRANSFER OF POWER

The revolt of 1857 led to several changes in the British policy towards the Indian states. One of the important changes was the extinction of the East India Company. On 1st November, 1858, a proclamation was issued by Queen Victoria, which assured the princes that the Imperial Crown had taken over the treaties and *sanads* issued by the East India Coy. and it had no desire to extend its territorial possessions and that the dignities, privileges and authorities of the princes and states would be maintained and remain undiminished.

With the transfer of power from the hands of the East India Company to the British Crown in 1858, the Simla Hill States, like other states of India, came under the protection of the Crown of England. 'who stood forward as the unquestioned ruler and paramount power in all India and was, for the first time, brought face to face with the feudatories.'⁷⁸

The theory of the British Crown serving as the sole link between the Central Government and the Indian States was systematically devel-

oped by the British statesmen so that the whole of India gradually came to be considered under a single charge. The sovereignty of the smaller princelings like those of the Simla Hill States, 'vanished almost to the point of nothingness'.⁷⁹

To neutralize or at least to isolate any mass movement or national upsurge, the British Government devised a way whereby it could always keep the feudal chiefs on its side. A Chamber of Princes consisting of 120 members was created as a deliberative consultative and advisory body on February 8, 1921. The Simla Hill States were represented by the six rulers of whom five were members in their own right⁸⁰, while the sixth was the elected representative of Chamba, Mandi, Suket, Bilaspur and Sirmur.⁸¹

After the Queen's Proclamation and the evolution of a new British policy towards the Indian States, there was a change in the treatment accorded to the Himachal hill chiefs. Many of them were treated very liberally⁸². Many hill chiefs were invited when the Delhi Darbar was held in 1877⁸³, and the Coronation Darbar at Delhi in December, 1911. Meanwhile, the British also contributed to the development of many Hill States. The hill chiefs continued to remain loyal towards the British during the First World War and many of them rendered valuable service to them both with men and materials. Later when the Chamber of Princes was formed in 1921, by virtue of 11 gun-salute, Chamba, Mandi, Suket and Sirmur became members of the Chamber, whereas Raja Bhagat Chand of Jubbal became an elected representative of the Simla Hill States in 1921 and again in 1933.

Meanwhile, at the national level, the struggle for political and constitutional rights and independence gained momentum. After the Second World War, when the Labour Party came to power in England, a mission of three cabinet ministers was sent to India (March, 1946) which interviewed many big and small states as well as the leaders of the Indian political parties. The Cabinet Mission recommended a federal type of government for the whole of India, including the Indian States. Accordingly an interim Government was formed under Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru on 2nd September, 1946. On 28th April, 1947, the representatives of the states joined the Constituent Assembly. Following the advice of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel and Lord Mountbatten, all states, with a few exceptions, decided on 25th July, 1947, to accede to the Indian Union in accordance with an instrument of accession. Accordingly Punjab Hill

States as well as Simla Hill States, along with all other Indian States (except Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagarh) acceded to the Indian Dominion by August 15, 1947.⁸⁴

On the eve of Indian Independence, the modern area of Himachal Pradesh, was almost equally divided between British Indian territory and the territory of Indian States. The latter was again equally divided between the Punjab Hill States and Simla Hill States. After independence, Himachal became a Chief Commissioner's Province. The new centrally administered unit was named *Himachal Pradesh*. With the Constitution becoming operational on January 26, 1950, Himachal Pradesh became a Part 'C' State and on November 1, 1956 it became a Union Territory. Statehood was granted to Himachal Pradesh on January 25, 1971 whereby it became the eighteenth State of the Indian Union⁸⁵.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. According to the Vanshavali, the ruling house of the Gurkhas is a branch of the Rana family of Chitor. The family traces its origin to one Rishiraj Bhattachar, Raja of Chitor. For details see B.D. Sanwal 'Nepal and the East India Company', (Bombay, 1965), Chapter V. See also W. Brook Northe and C.J. Morris, *The Gurkhas: Their Manners, Customs and Country*, (New Delhi, 1976), Chap.I.
2. B.D. Sanwal, *op.cit.*, pp. 43-44.
3. The country of Nepal was at that time, roughly divided into six group from east :(i) The Baisi Rajas (ii) The Chaubisi Rajas (iii) The Newar principality in the valley of Baghmati (iv) The principality under the Raja of Mackwanpur (v) Limbu and Lepcha chiefs and (vi) Certain Rajas of Tarai.
4. B.D. Sanwal, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.
5. According to traveller Vigne, 'All of these Rajas, took an oath of fidelity to the Gurkha chief, on the understanding that he was to retain Kangra fort, and they were to be left unmolested in their territories.' Letters in the Chamba archives also prove that in 1801 A.D., most of the states on both sides of Ravi were ready to combine against Raja Sansar Chand.
6. The military assistance of Chamba State to the Gurkhas is known from a letter preserved in the Chamba State Archives. In the letter written by Amar Singh Thapa to Raja Jit Singh, the latter is admonished not to be afraid of Trigad (Kangra). The letter further mentions that 'The Gurkhas, Chamba and Kahlu are all one.' Jit Singh is asked to send his Wazir to Dugar (Jammu) for help and for gathering all the Rajas. He (the Chamba ruler) is to keep a part of his army at Rihlu and send the rest to Sampal. The letter further states that the Katoch troops had seized Palam but the Gurkhas have driven them out and occupied Pathiyar. The letter is undated, but was probably written sometime before 1806-07.
7. 'So dreadful were the ravages they (the Gurkhas) committed that the inhabitants deserted their homes and fled into the neighbouring states. The country was thus partly depopulated, the land was uncultivated, wild animals roamed about the towns and grass grew into the deserted streets.'
8. For further details see chapter V, *Himachal and the Sikhs*.

9. According to the agreement, Ranjit Singh took possession of the fort and of the sixty-six villages in the Kangra valley, which had formed a part of the Imperial demense; leaving the rest of the State of Kangra in the hands of Sansar Chand. The latter was now reduced to the status of a feudatory. His downfall involved those of the associated states also, and from 1809 A.D., they all became subject to Lahore Kingdom.
10. For full text of the treaty see *Appendix-I*.
11. Claiming that he had been duped by the Sikhs, Amar Singh Thapa proposed a joint war against the Sikhs to the British authorities in Ludhiana. Nothing, however, came out of it and in 1814 when the Gurkhas themselves fought a war against the East India Company, their control on the mountainous territories between the Yamuna and the Sutlej had not been established. B.D. Sanwal, *op.cit.*, p. 51.
12. J.B. Fraser, *Journal of a Tour in the Snowy Ranges of the Himala Mountains and to the Sources of the Rivers Yamuna and Ganges*, (Delhi reprint), p. 61.
13. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.155.
14. B.D. Sanwal, *op. cit.*, p.162. In the war against the Gurkhas, it appears that many chieftains of the Punjab Hill States to the east of Sutlej, notably Bushahr, Hindur, Baghal, Kahlur, Sirmur, Shimla Hill States, and Kulu (on the other side of the Sutlej), contributed a great deal in the defeat of the Gurkhas by the British. It was with the help of the troops of these hill chiefs that Major Ochterlony was able to compel the Gurkha leader Amar Singh Thapa to sign the treaty at Sagauli in 1815 A.D. For details see James Baillie Fraser, *The Himala Mountains*, Delhi reprint, 1982. See also Anil Sharma, *Travologue as a Source of History: A Study of Fraser's Travels, in Himalayas*, H.P. University, M.Phil (History) Dissertation, 1982, (unpublished).
15. Letter from Col. Ochterlony to the Adj. Gen. dated Nalagarh, 6 November, 1814.
16. B.D. Sanwal, *op.cit.*, p.162-63.
17. *Ibid.*, p.163.
18. *Ibid.*, p.164.
19. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 158-59.
20. J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.6¹
21. William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p.29.
22. The reigning chief of Sirmur during the Gurkha attack was Raja Karam Parkash. J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.77.
23. The first day of the battle at Jythak cost the British over three hundred men in dead and wounded.
24. Fraser writes: 'The man who was, in point of power and influence, the true chief of Joobul, was named Dangee; who, under the title of *yurzeer*, exercised the

prince's authority. When at length he (Dangee) saw that the Ghoorkhas were sorely pressed, and that the campaign would terminate favourably for the British,.... openly declared himself, and enlisted in our pay with a body of 500 Joobilians.' J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.145.

25. J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, pp. 144-45.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Troops were left at Chopal, under the charge of a *risaldar*.
28. The fort of Rawingarh was situated just opposite to Hat Koti in Jubbal. When J.B. Fraser arrived at Hat Koti on March 17, 1815 A.D., he again met Dangi *wazir* with Jubbal troops. J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.154.
29. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.160.
30. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 160. For more details see J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, pp. 144-47.
31. These were Bushahr, Baghat, Baghal, Bhajji, Balson, Beja, Bilaspur, Darkoti, Dhami, Jubbal, Kumarsain, Kuthar, Kunihar, Keonthal, Mahlog, Mangal, Nalagarh, Sangri, Sirmur and Tharoch.
32. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.163.
33. The dates of the *sanads* granted to the twenty states are as under: (1) Bilaspur, March, 1815; (2-11) Baghal, Kuthar, Baghat, Bhajji, Dhami, Mahlog, Beja, Keonthal, Sirmur, Balson: September 1815; (12) Nalagarh, October, 1815; (13) Jubbal, Nov. 1815; (14-17) Sangri, Mangal, Darkoti, Kunihar, December, 1815; (18-19) Kumarsein, Bushahr, Feb. 1816 (20) Tharoch, January, 1819.
34. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.163.
35. Kavita Handa, *British Government and the Erstwhile Princely States of Himachal: A Study based on Treaties and Sanads*, H.P. University, M.Phil. (History) Dissertation, 1984 (unpublished), p.62.
36. For the list of the states asked to supply the *begarees* by the British government see, Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, (Calcutta, 1931), Vol. I. Only four states viz Nalagarh, Darkoti, Sangri and Sirmur were exempted from this obligation.
37. The Rajas of Bushahr, Chamba, Mandi and Suket were asked to pay an annual tribute in the British treasury as a condition laid down in the *sanads*.
38. For other obligations see Kavita Handa, *op.cit.*, pp. 64-65.
39. Aitchison, *op.cit.*, pp. 351-52. The other important condition we come across is, that the Rajas were required not to levy any toll or other taxes on the import and export of the goods within their territories. In addition to this they were made responsible for the security of the bankers and traders within their territories. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*
41. It may be noted that in case of Chamba, the Government was to pay the wages of soldiers and bearers of carriage. In the *sanad*, the government had laid down that on the occasion of war, the Raja shall join the British army, furnish provisions and supply soldiers on a monthly pay of five rupees each, and bearers to carry baggage on a salary of four rupees each. *Ibid.*, p.325.
42. For further details see Kavita Handa, *op.cit.*, Ch. III.
43. M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, p.95.
44. Aitchison, *op.cit.*, p.71. It is important to note that almost in every *sanad* granted to the chiefs of the Simla Hill States, the British Government laid down the condition that no Raja should encroach beyond his own territory. However, the British on their own part, did not hesitate to retain those areas which were strategically important.
45. Kavita Handa, *op.cit.*, p.10.
46. Aitchison, *op.cit.*, p.91.
47. *Ibid.*, p.97.
48. *Ibid.*, p.306.
49. As against this, in some cases the British issued some *sanads* through which they granted additional lands to some states which came under the British domination during the period 1815-18. For details see Aitchison, *op.cit.*, pp. 92, 100, 307.
50. *Ibid.*, p.307.
51. M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, p.96.
52. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.167.
53. For details see S.K. Gupta, 'From the Anglo-Gurkha War to 1914' in M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, pp. 96-99.
54. the Raja of Sirmur also offered to pay a *nazrana* of Rs. 1,75,000 for Jaunsar-Bawar and Rs. 50,000 for Kaidra Dun.
55. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, p.173.
56. The Raja of Sirmur was asked to pay Rs. 53,000 in the Ambala treasury in exchange of the Kiadra Dun. The other conditions included: (1) rights of the people to be respected and justice impartially administered; (2) No transit duties or customs to be levied; (3) Roads to be made and existing ones to be kept in repair, and (4) protection to travellers and merchants by efficient policing.
57. Ramgarh was allowed to be occupied by Maldeo and Narain Das; Pundar was

- annexed to Keonthal; Humer and Ganjari were also ceded to Keonthal; The *ilaqa* of Morni was ceded to Syed Jafar, the representative of the Muslim family which formerly possessed it; Pinjor was given to the Raja of Patiala; Both Jubbal and Utraj were given independent status for these had exerted themselves against the Gurkhas. The ruler of Kulu who had taken possession of Kotgarh was asked to quit.
58. R.K. Kaushal, *Himachal Pradesh* (Bombay, 1965), p.92. Bilaspur paid tribute to the Sikhs only for the State on the right bank of the Sutlej.
59. Raja Kharak Chand (who came to occupy the Bilaspur *gaddi* in 1824 A.D.) is noted for his mismanagement of the state administration. He confiscated the *jagirs* of many officials and publicly hanged many for no fault of theirs. His tyranny and oppression led to a civil war, and the intervention by the British in 1827, 1832, and 1839 by William Murray and George Russell Clerk, the Political Agents. For details see Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 168-69.
60. After the death of Raja Kharak Chand (who died issueless), the British installed Mian Jangi (renamed as Raja Jagat Chand) in April, 1839 as the new chief and all claims of Raja Fateh Chand of Sirmur were ignored. When the Sirmur ruler invaded Bilaspur, he was defeated by the British forces and fined. *Ibid.*, p.169.
61. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 174-75.
62. Fauja Singh, 'Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the face of the British challenge', in *Punjab Past and Present*, (Patiala) Oct. 1980. p.174.
63. J.D. Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs* (Delhi reprint), p.163.
64. *Foreign Political Proceedings*, 16 August, 1829, No. 3.
65. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 90-91.
66. For details of the Anglo-Sikh wars see Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Oxford, 1977, Vol. II.
67. Raja Shamsher Singh of Guler was successful in expelling the Sikhs from the fort of Haripur. Raja Bir singh also laid siege to the fort of Nurpur but was unable to capture the fort. The Sikh forces were expelled from Kotwalbah by Raja Narain Pal of Kutlehr. Raja Balbir Sen of Mandi attacked the Sikh garrisons in his state and captured all the forts with exception of Kamlahgarh. M.S.Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, p.99.
68. Three years later, on March 29, 1849, Lord Dalhousie proclaimed annexation of Punjab thus depriving the last ruler, Prince Dalip Singh, of his crown and kingdom.
69. The Bilaspur state had held this territory since 1809 on terms of allegiance and tribute to the Sikhs. The British waived their claim to the tribute, but the Raja was required to abolish duties in his country.
70. For details see Kavita Handa, *op.cit.*, Ch. II.
71. Aitchison, *op.cit.*, p.89.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 351-52.
73. Had the provisions of the treaty of March 16, 1846 been fully carried out, Chamba would have become an integral part of Jammu territory. It was saved from such a fate by the patriotic zeal and efforts of Wazir Bhaga, who immediately proceeded to Lahore and succeeded in securing his sympathy and support in his favour. Bhadarwah thus ceased to be a Chamba territory but rest of the state was left intact.
74. Aitchison *op.cit.*, pp 324-25
75. See for example the rebellion of Wazir Ram Singh Pathania in Chapter VII, *Popular Uprisings and the Social Reform Movements*.
76. For details of sanads issued during this period see Kavita Handa, *op.cit.*, Chapters II-III. See also Aitchison, *op.cit.*, vol. I, pp 89, 308-09, 318, 3551-52.
77. For details concerning Himachal and the revolt of 1857 see Chapter VII, *Popular Uprisings and the Social Reform Movements*.
78. Raghbir Singh, *Indian States and the New Regime* (Bombay, 1938), p. 34
79. K.M. Panikar, *Indian States and the Government of India*, (London 1932), p.144
80. V.P. Menon, *The Story of Integration of Indian States*, (Calcutta, 1956), p.17
81. See Memoranda on Indian States (Delhi, 1939), pp.228, 239, 246, 255 and 263. For details see also G.C. Kaushal, 'Himachal Pradesh Through the Centuries' in Punjab History Conference Proceedings, 5th Session, (Patiala, 1970), pp.269-272.
82. For example, the rebellious attitude of the Raja of Rampur Bushahr was overlooked; Raja Ram Singh, son of Raja Jai Singh of Jaswan, was permitted to return from Almora and was restored to his jagir; Mian Dev Chand, son of Raja Jagat Chand of Datapur, was also allowed to return, although his jagir was not restored to him; The pension of Raja of Nurpur was doubled in 1861; The Chamba chiefs were granted the right to adoption of the failure of direct heirs in 1862. Many other rulers were awarded khilats, gifts and titles for having helped the British during the mutiny. (For details see Chapter VII)
83. For example the Rajas of Chamba (Raja Sham Singh), Mandi (Raja Bijai Sen), Bilaspur (Raja Hira Chand).
84. Raja Anand Chand of Bilaspur however, declined to join the Indian Dominion and declared independence after the lapse of paramountcy. Bilaspur was finally merged with the Himachal Pradesh on 1st July, 1954.
85. For political process in Himachal Pradesh see Ranbir Sharma, *Party Politics in a Himalayan State*, Delhi, 1977.
- For details see also Y.S. Parmar, *Himachal Pradesh: Case for Statehood*, H.P. Government, Simla, 1958; *Ibid.*, *Himachal Pradesh: Its Proper Shape and Status*, H.P. Government, Simla, 1965.

CHAPTER - VII

**POPULAR UPRISINGS
AND
SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS**

CHAPTER - VII

POPULAR UPRISINGS AND SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS

There had been a number of social reform movements, popular uprisings and constitutional agitations within the princely hill states of Himachal Pradesh beginning at least from the middle of the nineteenth century. These can be studied under two broad headings:

1. Uprisings or agitations against the British and the hill Rajas; and
2. Social reform movements.

A. Uprising Against the British and the hill Rajas

The first popular uprising against the British during the middle of the nineteenth century was led by Ram Singh Pathania, son of the last *wazir* of Nurpur in the Kangra hills. It may be recalled here that on the conclusion of the First Anglo-Sikh War, the treaty signed at Lahore (9th March, 1846 A.D.) led to the transfer to the British government of the hill territories between the Beas and the Sutlej. The Kangra Hill States were under the illusion that all the chiefs of the hill states would be reinstated in their respective principalities by the British government. However, it turned out to be different.

The disaffected hill chiefs were approached by the Sikh leaders in the early summer of 1848 A.D. and were incited to join the rebellion

which was then maturing. The hill chiefs were promised that their states would be restored in the event of the British being expelled from the Punjab. An attempt was made by Ram Singh Pathania to throw off the British yoke. He entered into treaties with the other rulers in the Kangra hills¹ and raised rebellion against the British.

The British, on the other hand were conscious of the strategic importance of the Kulu-Kangra region and as such they took the earliest possible opportunity to annex these. The British Government, while taking over these regions and territories was confident of the fact that all the Rajput chiefs of the area were deeply anti-Sikh and would, as such, welcome the British with open arms. However, the Rajputs of Himachal were quick to realise the altogether different intentions of the imperialists. Therefore, the British authorities had to face stiff resistance both from the local population, led by Ram Singh Pathania, as well as the officials and the garrisons of the Sikhs posted there².

At this crucial juncture, the British officials, particularly, Erskine³, instigated the hill Rajas to rise against the Sikhs, on the false promise that for this they will be adequately compensated. Therefore, during 1846-47, some hill Rajas, did help the British against the Sikhs probably coming under the false notion that they will enjoy greater autonomy under the latter than they had enjoyed under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successors. The Raja of Nurpur was one of them. But to the surprise of the Raja, the hereditary *wazir* of Nurpur⁴, took up the cause of the Sikhs.

To punish the Nurpur Raja, the British decided to annex the territory of the Raja against an annual pension of Rs.20,000 only and that too only on the condition of leaving his hereditary residence and staying across the river Sutlej. The negotiations between the Pathanias and the British continued for more than a year but Mian Sham Singh and his son Ram Singh, refused to accept the humiliating terms⁵.

After collecting a large number of people from the neighbouring hills, Ram Singh Pathania crossed Ravi and threw himself into the unoccupied fort of Shahpur⁶. He proclaimed Jaswant Singh, son of Bir Singh, as the Raja of Nurpur and Ram Singh as his *wazir*. When the news of the uprising reached Hoshiarpur, the British despatched a force which hastened to the spot and attacked the fort of Shahpur. The British pressure

compelled the mutineers to vacate the fort and take up another position on a wooded range of hills, close to the town of Nurpur.

The British now sent additional reinforcements under J. Lawrence, the Commissioner and Mr. Barnes, District Officer. The new shelter of Ram Singh was stormed and he was compelled to flee to Rasul in Gujrat⁷. During his period of struggle, Ram Singh was joined by about 400 men from the adjoining villages, including some Rajputs of his own caste.

The struggle was renewed in 1849 A.D. Ram Singh persuaded Raja Sher Singh (son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) to give him two Sikh regiments of five hundred soldiers to make a renewed effort to achieve his mission. Ram Singh took up position on the heights on Dula or Dala or Dala Ka Dhar, a ridge, which overhangs the Ravi and faces the plains, the quarter from which an assailing army must proceed. From the operational point of view, the place was very strategic.

To counter the moves of Ram Singh, a British force under Brigadier Wheeler was sent and the battle continued for many days. The place was captured by the British with a heavy loss on both sides. Many young officers of the British army were killed, including John Peel, a nephew of Sir Robert Peel and Robert Brown⁸.

Wazir Ram Singh was finally arrested due to the treachery of a Brahmin, whom Ram Singh trusted as a friend, as also due to the betrayal of the Rajas of Jammu and Guler, who helped the British. As during his anti-British campaign, so also during his trial, Ram Singh never compromised with the British at any cost. The statements he made in defence of his action, were bold and frank, befitting his Rajput heritage. He openly confessed to the British : 'as an old servant of the *Khalsa Sarkar*, whose salt he had eaten'. G.C. Barnes, in his judgement delivered on 21st April, 1849, therefore awarded death sentence to Wazir Ram Singh⁹.

On receiving the instructions of the Board of Administration, Punjab, Mr. D.H. Macleod held the trial of Wazir Ram Singh and pronounced his judgement on 25th July, 1849. Mr Macleod recommended that Ram Singh may be imprisoned outside Punjab for life. The Board, however, submitted the case for final orders of the Governor General, stating that Ram Singh was the 'life and soul of the disturbances

in Nurpur' and that both Ram Singh and his father Sham Singh, were the foremost in encouraging the 'unquiet spirits of the country' even at the time of the anti-British revolt at Kangra in 1846. It was finally recommended that Ram Singh be imprisoned for life and that he was to spend his remaining life under the iron bars beyond the high seas. He was sent to Burma and kept imprisoned in the jail in Moulmein. He died there on 11th November, 1856¹⁰.

During the same period when Wazir Ram Singh Pathania of Nurpur revolted, the Rajas of Kangra, Jaswan and Datarpur also rose in rebellion. They were however, defeated sometime in November, 1848. Parbodh Chand, the Raja of Kangra, was apprehended by the British at Sujanpur Tira, captured and sent to Almora as a political prisoner, where he ultimately died in 1851 A.D. The Rajas of Datarpur and Jaswan also met with the same fate. The forts of Amb and Kharot were blasted by the British cannons¹¹.

From Revolt of 1857 to Transfer of Power

The next important phase of the Himachal history begins with the great revolt of 1857 which originated from a number of socio-political reasons and came to surface with the mishandling of the greased-cartiridge affair. There had already been a growing resentment and dissatisfaction brewing among the Himachal chiefs which arose out of the non-restoration of their territories by the British after the Anglo-Sikh Wars.

Generally, the people of Himachal Pradesh were far less advanced socially and politically than their counterparts in the plains. This was coupled with the fact they were subject to all sorts of economic exploitation by the native rulers or their agents. The presence of some Christian missionaries also led to mistrust and suspicion among the Himachalis, particularly those of the Shimla Hill States.

During the revolt of 1857, some of the Himachal Hill States also participated in the general upheaval by with-holding the tribute. Raja Shamsher Singh of Rampur Bushahr was the first to act in a hostile way to the British and refused to pay tribute¹².

When the British came to know about the defiant attitude of the

Raja of Rampur, Lord William Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla and Agent for the Hill States, proposed to send a force to Rampur and recommended the deposition of the Raja and taking over his State under the direct control of the British. Nothing was done, however, as no troops were available. The proposal was however, not accepted by Sir John Lawrence, the then Chief Commissioner of Punjab and 'the Raja's behaviour during the great revolt was overlooked.'¹³

In 1857, a battalion of the British army, mainly consisting of the Rajputs and the Gurkhas, was stationed at Jutogh (Simla). Troops were also stationed at Dagshai, Kasauli, and Sabathu. The Gurkha regiment, known as Nasri Battalion, refused to comply with the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, General Ason, who was being pressed hard for help by Sir John Lawrence, the Commissioner of Punjab.¹⁴

Subedar Bhim Singh revolted against the British along with his platoon at Kasauli. The soldiers of Kasauli guard, numbering about 80, marched away with a huge sum of government money to join their fellow-soldiers at Jutogh. The two units unitedly revolted against the British and the British residents of Simla ran helter skelter.

The revolt, however, was soon crushed. Subedar Ram Singh was awarded the death sentence, but he managed to escape and took shelter at Rampur, where, on hearing the failure of the revolt, he committed suicide. The revolt was checked due to the timely help rendered by the Raja of Keonthal, who gave shelter to the panic stricken English men and women at Simla and Junga.

Order, however, was restored soon with the help of the Simla Hill Chiefs, most of whom remained loyal to the British during the revolt.¹⁵ There were some disturbances in the State of Nalagarh too. Fearing, lest the mutiny might extend to Ropar tehsil, and lest the arms etc., should fall in the hands of the Gurkhas and other disaffected people, a group of people of Malaon seized them and refused to allow the party in charge of the armoury, to proceed. Mian Jai Singh, the brother of the Rana of Baghal, was at once deputed by Lord William Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla, to the disturbed locality. It was with the help of Mian Jai Singh that order was restored in the area.

During early June, an attempt was made in Kulu by one Partap Singh¹⁶ (who pretended to be the rightful Raja of the state) to excite the

people to rise in rebellion against the British. The uprising was, however, detected and suppressed. Partap Singh and his followers were captured and tried by a commission, consisting of the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra and his two assistants. Partap Singh and his close associate, Bir Singh were condemned to death and executed.

The British, as a precautionary measure, disbanded the Kangra 4th Native Infantry¹⁷, in the forts of Kangra and Nurpur. On June 10th, it was reported that Jullundhur troops had mutinied and on the 11th news came to Simla that a portion of them were crossing 'Sutlej' at Makhowal and heading towards Pinjor. Capt. D. Briggs, Superintendent of Hill Roads, immediately started to Nalagarh with a view to prevent the mutineers from entering the hills. He was assisted with the troops supplied by the chiefs of Bilaspur, Baghal and Nalagarh. Before Captain Briggs could reach Pinjor, the mutineers had passed through Nalagarh.¹⁸

The hill chiefs on the whole, remained loyal to the British and helped them with money and material in suppressing the revolt. The revolt also failed due to the fact that the sepoys stationed in the hills failed to establish their supremacy unlike their counterparts in Oudh and Rohilkhand. In some areas, the people also helped the British in capturing the mutineers, although there are also instances of certain individuals who were charged with instigating the mutiny.¹⁹

In the Kangra hills, the mass of population, exhibited friendliness and a spirit of loyalty towards the British Government. In Nurpur, some hill people helped the British by capturing the fugitive mutineers of the Sialkot Brigade. As already stated even the Raja of Chamba arranged for protection of the British ladies and children in the sanitarium of Dalhousie. He also captured thirty men of the Sialkot mutineers and handed them over to the local authorities at Kangra.

Among the hill chiefs who gave active assistance to the British in checking the mutiny, mention may be made of the chiefs of Keonthal, Koti, Balson, Bilaspur, Sirmur, Baghal, Dhami, Bhajji, Jubbal, Chamba, Nurpur, Mandi, Siba, and Nadaun. In recognition of their services during the revolt, some of them were suitably rewarded by the British with the salute of guns, *khilats* and honorary titles apart from several gifts.²⁰ In short, the nature of mutiny in Himachal hills is more or less akin to the revolt in Punjab, where most of the chiefs remained loyal and helped

strengthening the hands of the imperial power.

The Praja Mandal Movement

The struggle of the common hill people against the oppressive and the unjust rule of the Princely States in Himachal Pradesh, led to several protest movements. The main objectives of the people's struggle was the democratisation of the administration and introduction of social reforms for the people living in the hill areas. The people in the hill areas participated in the freedom struggle with the specific object of throwing off not only the British Yoke but also the rule of terror, high-handedness, slavery and feudalism of the hill chiefs of the Himachal state.

Thus in the hills of Himachal Pradesh, there were two types of movements going on simultaneously : (i) The Praja Mandal Movement²¹ and (ii) the Freedom Movement.²² The peoples' struggle later gave rise to the formation of the Praja Mandals. The Praja Mandal workers participated in the various agitations and struggles launched into the British Indian territory while the members of the various political and social organisations in the latter place crossed over to the State territories to help the Praja Mandalists.

The Ludhiana Conference

In 1938, a session of All India States Peoples' Conference was held at Ludhiana in which it was decided to form Praja Mandals in the hill states and to devote special attention towards perennial problem of these areas. Thus the reform movements and the agitations against the hill Rajas started gaining strength under the banner of the Praja Mandals. However, due to the repressive measures, their activities were either suspended or they had to go underground or shift themselves to the adjoining British areas. By the end of the thirties of the present century, the *Himalayan Riyasti Praja Mandal* was organised and made responsible for directing the activities of the social and political workers in the hill states.

As a result of such attempts, a general awakening and political consciousness grew among the hill people. This led to simultaneous establishment of Praja Mandals in Chamba, Sirmur, Mandi, Rampur Bushahr, Sundernagar and other princely States. In order to coordinate the work of these Praja Mandals, the *Himalayan Riyasti Praja Mandal*.

was formed to direct the various activities of social and political workers in the various hill states. Finally one organisation called 'Himalayan States Regional Council', with its headquarters at Simla, was formed. It was affiliated to the All India States Peoples' Conference. The various Praja Mandals of the Punjab Hill States naturally became its members.

Movement Gains Momentum: 'The Dhami Firing Tragedy'

The various Praja Mandals began to encourage the hill people to refuse to pay unjust taxes, to fight against cruelties and not to perform *begar*. The people were further asked neither to give recruits for the British army nor money towards the war funds. Thus a sort of civil disobedience movement was launched which led to the arrest of a large number of Praja Mandalists.²³

These movements gradually gained inspiration and momentum leading to many agitations in the hill states, the most famous being the 'Dhami Firing Tragedy', 'Bhai, Do Na Pai', 'Pajhota Agitation' and the movement in demand for a responsible government in the State of Chamba.²⁴ Soon after the simultaneous establishment of the various Praja Mandals, the Dhami Praja Mandal decided to test its strength. It passed resolutions asking for the abolition of *begar*, reduction of land-revenues by fifty percent and the grant of civil liberties. The resolutions further demanded for the establishment of a responsible government in Dhami and removal of restrictions on the State subjects.

The confrontation between the Praja Mandalists and Dhami rulers led to the Dhami firing tragedy which resulted in the death of two persons.²⁵ The tragedy exposed the inefficient and deplorable state of affairs not only in Dhami but other hill states as well. The tragedy proved a turning point in the hill peoples' struggle for social and political reforms and resulted in their final integration into a single unit.

Meanwhile the independence of India brought a dramatic change in the thinking and outlook of people in the hill states. The rulers could no longer suppress popular agitations of the people. They however, adopted delaying tactics as they were not interested in handing over power to the people. Therefore it became necessary and important for the people's, representatives working under the All India States Peoples' Conference, to step up their activities in these states.

The rulers of the Simla Hill States, on the other hand, met at New Delhi in the first week of January, 1948 to chalk out their future strategies. In this meeting the rulers passed a resolution and decided to constitute a Union of States for the greater good of the people of the Himalayan States. At the same time, Raja Durga Singh of Bhagat and the Raja of Mandi met Mahatma Gandhi, who advised them to call a joint meeting of the representatives of the Praja Mandals and the rulers to decide the issue.²⁶

As suggested by Mahatma Gandhi, an assembly of representatives of the rulers and the Praja Mandalists met at Solan from 26th to 28th January under the chairmanship of Raja Durga Singh of Bhagat. The assembly was confined to the Simla Hill States only. It decided to constitute a Union of States to be named as 'Himachal Pradesh' and the decision to this effect was communicated to the Government of India on March 1, 1948.

The move was, however, opposed by a section of the Praja Mandalists led by Shri Padam Dev and Dr. Y.S. Parmar, who understood the hidden designs and intentions of the rulers behind such a move. They refused to recognise this Union of States until the power was transferred to the people and the individual identity of the States were erased out. The rulers refused to yield and consequently these leaders went to Delhi and apprised Sardar Patel of the real intentions of the hill chiefs. The Government of India thus refused to recognise the proposed Union of States and thus the attempts of the hill rulers did not materialise.²⁷

The Praja Mandalists of this section now decided to take effective and solid steps to force the issue of integration of the Hill States with the Indian Dominion. Accordingly, a Himalayan Prant Provisional Government²⁸ with its headquarters at Simla was established under the Presidentship of Shri Shiva Nand Ramaul to secure the immediate merger of the Himalayan States with the Indian dominion and to frustrate the selfish designs of the hill chiefs. At the same time the people of the Himalayan States were also determined to free themselves from the despotic rulers.

It was now becoming evident that the days of the despotic and autocratic rule of the hill chiefs were almost numbered. It may, however be pointed out that till the climate became favourable for political activity, the Praja Mandalists and many other social workers in the

Himachal region turned to socio-religious activities which included opening of educational institutions or dispensaries etc.²⁹ In the state of Sirmur, for instance, a few enthusiastic young men started agitating for social and administrative reforms and economic upliftment covertly and overtly. A Praja Mandal came to be formed in the State in 1935-36. The Sirmur chief looked upon the new organisation as something like an organisation of some disgruntled heads and the movement was suppressed with impunity. Even the most innocuous demand for social reform was turned down unceremoniously.

Till 1936, the political activities in the Sirmur State continued from underground. However, in 1937, a regular Praja Mandal was formed under the presidentship of Chaudhary Sher Jang, who joined the movement after his release from the Ahmedgarh jail in the Punjab. The Praja Mandal activities continued till the merger document was signed in the presence of about thirty thousand people on March 13, 1948.³⁰

The Suket Satyagrah

A civil disobedience movement was launched in the Suket State (in Karsog tehsil of Mandi) which was one of the erstwhile Princely States among the East Punjab Hill States. The movement is popularly known as Suket Satyagrah, launched under the patronage of the Praja Mandal Party in February, 1948, which finally led to the merger of the State with the Indian Union. The Suket Satyagrah is particularly interesting as it helps us in understanding the pattern of the political awakening in the Hill states of Himachal Pradesh leading to the end of the despotic rule and expeditation of the process of integration of the Hill States with the Indian Dominion.

As elsewhere, the Suket State was also noted for its inefficient system of administration. The officials of the State were corrupt and tyrannical. The Court and the Darbar itself was infamous for receiving bribes by way of *nazar* and *bhaints*. The will of the Darbar was the fundamental law and the most hated *begar* or forced labour was also prevalent in the State. The oppressive policies of the *Darbar* led to widespread discontentment and uprisings. This discontentment and resentment continued to grow in the State till the satyagrah in February, 1948 was launched.³¹

One section of the Praja Mandalists³² was now determined to take solid and effective steps to force the issue of integration of the Hill States with the Indian Dominion. With this aim a Himalayan Prant Provisional Government with its head-quarters at Simla was established under the presidentship of Shri Shiva Nand Ramaul. The other members of the Provisional Government were Sarvashri Sada Nand Chandel of Bilaspur, Pt.Padam Dev of Rampur Bushahr and Mukand Lal of Suket.³³ The Provisional Government had the sanction of All India States People's Conference.

The leaders of the Provisional Government met at Suni on February 8, 1946 and resolved to launch a movement to secure the merger of the Himalayan States with the Indian Union. Suket State was selected as the first target by the leaders because the climate and circumstances were very favourable there for such a movement.³⁴ On February 16, 1948, a forty-eight hours notice was served to the ruler of the Suket State, Raja Lakshman Sen,³⁵ to hand over the State administration in the hands of the people for its merger with the Indian Dominion.

When no response was received to this ultimatum, a non-violent movement was started on February 18, 1948 in two prongs. One column consisting of one thousand strong *satyagrahis*, under the leadership of Shri Padam Dev, marched from Tatta Pani on Suket border and the second from Behnaa village in the Indian territory. When the news of this march reached the oppressed people of the State, they also joined the *satyagrahis* in large numbers.

The *satyagrahis* met hardly any resistance from the State forces or Police as it was completely demoralised due to the overwhelming response which the *satyagrahis* received from the subjects of the State as well as others. The limited resources at their disposal also prevented the State Police from dealing strongly with a mass movement of such a magnitude. Consequently, the police posts fell to the *satyagrahis* and the tehsil headquarters were also taken without much resistance.

On the fifth day, (February 23, 1948), the *satyagrahis* of both the columns joined at Karsog. They encamped at Jaidevi, only eight miles from Sundernagar, the capital of the State. By now, more than three-fourths of the territory had been occupied by the *satyagrahis* in the name of the people's government. The police posts captured by the *satyagrahis*

included those of Phernu, Kotli, Karsog, Pangna, Nihari and Jaidevi.³⁶ Meanwhile the people of the Dehar tehsil also rose in rebellion and half of its territory was also liberated.

With the intensification of the *satyagrah*, the local officials saw their safety in pledging their loyalty to the people's government. The recalcitrant elements were either suppressed or their leaders, mostly police and higher executives, were imprisoned by the people. In this way Suket fell. The State, finding itself unable to resist the onslaught, appealed for help to the Government of India, who advised the State to sign the instrument of merger.

The *satyagrah* was called off on the suggestion of the Ministry of States, Government of India and the administration of the State was handed over to the Administrator sent by the Centre on March 8, 1948.³⁷

Needless to point out that the *satyagrah* created greater awakening among the people of other States whose rulers also took the cue from this movement and hastened to sign the merger agreements. These States were taken over by the Government of India and on April 15, 1948, a separate, centrally administered unit known as Himachal Pradesh came into existence under its first Chief Commissioner, Shri N.C. Mehta.³⁸

Social Reform Movements

The early twentieth century is also marked by the establishment of non-official organisations in the Himachal Pradesh for the removal of social evils and redress of the people's grievances. The Congress agitation in the British India and the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi at the political scene of India, had its own repercussions on the state people's movement. Inspite of the oppressive rule and the ruthless tyranny of the Indian princes, the hill people decided to stand on their own feet. They started their work by setting up *Sewa Samitis*, *Hittkari Sabhas*, night schools, reading rooms and circulating libraries. Every opportunity was availed of for creating a public opinion against the oppressive laws and personal rule of the princes.³⁹

Among the most important social reform organisations, mention may be made of the Rajput and Brahmin *Sabhas*, *Sanatan Dharma* and *Arya Samaj Sabhas*, *Sewak Sanghas*, *Sudhar Sammelans*, *Prem Sabhas*

and *Sewa Samitis*. These associations undertook to launch campaigns to eradicate such evil social practices as *reet*, untouchability and child marriage and to encourage widow remarriage. However, at times, the meetings of these associations were also utilised for the discussion of political issues.

Attempts were made by some of the Simla Hill States to put an end to the custom of *reet*⁴⁰ by legislation. The social reformers and public associations did all they could to carry on an intensive propaganda against this custom. The *Rajput Sthaniya Sabha*, the *Himalaya Vidya Prabhandini Sabha* and the Hind Conference Simla brought this subject to the forefront of public attention and approached the highest authorities for its suppression.

Substantial work in this connection was done by the *Himalaya Vidya Prabandhini Sabha*, which volunteered its services for the cause of the hill people. It convened small gatherings, started propaganda work, issued pamphlets and tried its best to root out this social evil. In a letter to the superintendent, Simla Hill States, the secretary of the *sabha* wrote in 1924 that:

‘Some of the chiefs of the hill states seemed to have prepared *reet* to continue unchecked perhaps because of the handsome income they derive by way of the percentage they levied on the sale money of women. This percentage was intended to serve as a deterrent to the custom by imposing additional liability on the party concerned, but was now looked upon as no more than a tax, like others, leviable by, and due to the State.’⁴¹

The *sabha* passed a resolution, stating that no woman should remarry in her husband’s lifetime. It appealed to the government to penalize the custom as the people were unable to put a stop to it themselves, as in the case of *sati* or infanticide. The *sabha* submitted a proposal to insert a provision in the Indian Penal Code dealing with *barda-feroshi*, and to amend section 361 of the code in order to raise the age of marriage in the case of boys from 14 to 16. It also addressed a letter to the Deputy Commissioner, Simla on August 1, 1924, suggesting that the proposed legislation should provide for the following:

- (a) The definition of *barda-feroshi* should be wide enough to include father, brother and husband of a girl or whoever sells her

not for bona fide purposes but ostensibly for illicit intercourse and free latitude of marriage.⁴²

- (b) Provision should be made for declaring liable to punishment any person who procures a married or unmarried girl either for the sake of marrying her or for passing her on to another person for similar purpose.
- (c) Purchase of a girl for employment as household servant or for the purposes of giving her away in dowry as a 'Khawas' or maid servant with a bride should be prohibited.⁴³

The cause taken up by the *sabha* found support in the Hindu Conference which was held in 1924 in Simla. Among others, the following resolution was passed at the conference:

'The custom of *reet* which prevails in the hills, being the root cause of the degraded condition of the people of hills, their poverty and misery, and of the depletion of the population and being contrary to the *Shastras*, the rulers and the chiefs of the Hill States and the Deputy Commissioner and the Agent to the Governor - General, Punjab States, in whose jurisdiction the evil custom prevails, be requested to put it down by appropriate legislation. The Hindu community would feel grateful to them for the boon.'

One more important resolution⁴⁴ was passed by the Conference with regard to this custom which ran as follows:

'That the conference is of the opinion that the decrees of the Courts of the ruling chiefs of the Hill States in the matter of restitution of conjugal rights should be recognised and enforced by the British Indian Courts, and the decrees of the British Indian Courts be recognised and enforced by the courts of the ruling chiefs of the Hill States: that the non-recognition of such decrees is a source of great hardship and social mischief to the people.'⁴⁵

In the erstwhile states of Himachal Pradesh, a pernicious system of service of land tenure (*beth*)⁴⁶ was prevalent. It worked to the disadvantage of the *bethu* community who cultivated the *basa* land. Numerous other means of raising money were devised and resorted to by

the princes. These included levies at the time of marriage, deaths, accessions to the throne and other religious ceremonies in the princely states. As these levies were imposed arbitrarily and collected ruthlessly, the associations began to raise their voice in favour of their abolition.

Begar

Furthermore, *begar*, the practice of rendering service gratis of various types also existed in the hill states. Describing *begar* or forced labour in the hills, Satyanand Stokes wrote:

'Begar or forced labour in the hills was a system by which the transportation of each state was carried on. It was not from state to state as at present but from one village to the next. Though unpaid, this system entailed little hardship, not only because there was not much to carry by reason of the very simplicity of the administration; but because only the *begar* of the state and its officials was carried.'⁴⁷

After the expulsion of the invading Gurkhas in 1814 and at the request of the hill peoples and their chiefs, the British Indian Government (then the East India Company) became the suzerain power in this region, and superintendence of the affairs of the petty hill states became necessary. For this purpose, the authorities availed themselves of the existing system of *begar*, *kar* or *atwara*.⁴⁸

Describing the lot of *begaries*, Satyanand Stokes wrote:

'He (*begaria*) is often cursed, sometimes beaten, his interest ignored. The hillman has gradually been relegated to the position of a beast of burden and a helot. Not only are his rights as a free man denied and his work seriously interfered with but the relation in which he stands to those who can force him to give them services is demoralizing..'⁴⁹

Lastly, the *rast* or *rasad* was the custom which gave the officials of the state the right to free provisions when on tour in the villages. All these rights were maintained by the chiefs of the hill states.

Apart from all these, the age-old poverty in the hills often compelled many hillmen to go to the towns in the plains of Punjab and elsewhere in search of petty jobs. They had to work there under the most

humiliating conditions and 'felt aggrieved, exploited and oppressed.' The fact that the hill people began to look upon *begar* and other levies which they had been tolerating for centuries as unjust indicated the growth of consciousness amongst them.⁵⁰ This, together with various other social and political factors led to the organisation of various *Praja Mandals* in the hill areas with avowedly political objectives.

It is thus evident that in the princely states of Himachal Pradesh, the social position of the cultivators, agricultural labourers, artisans and servants was very deplorable and they were placed lowest in the caste hierarchy. They were considered as untouchables, and even their shadows appear to have been disturbing to the orthodox people.⁵¹

Caste differences in the hill areas had been responsible for many misfortunes in the past and they prevented the growth of unity and solidarity among the people. Since it was based on the irrational and unpredictable phenomenon of birth, it reduced the social organism to its lowest denomination and its rigid differentiation allowed only a loose and feeble integration. Hence, the Hindu society has shown, throughout its history, a low capacity of resistance to external attacks, although it enjoyed the longevity of a primitive organism.⁵²

The status of women in the hill states was the worst. They were denied the right of property, condemned to either life-long widowhood or to cremation on the pyre of the dead husband in the form of a *sati*,⁵³ and exposed to suffer the cruel consequences of polygamy. Deprived of education, shut up in the *zenana* and treated as dependents, their condition was hardly better than that of slaves.

Apart from *sati*, the other social evil prevalent in the hills of Himachal Pradesh, was the human sacrifice. Usha Devi and Bhima Kali of Bushahr are well-known for such sacrifices. Usha Devi, the peculiar Goddess of the Bushahris seems to have been worshipped since very early times. Bhima Kali appears to be Chandika herself. The main temple of the two Goddesses are situated side by side at Sarahan, which was once the capital of the State.⁵⁴

It would be wrong to think that there was no strong demand for western education and social reforms in the early twentieth century and that these were introduced entirely by the British on their own initiative.

As we have noticed above, several public associations were formed in Himachal Pradesh which agitated mainly for the educational reforms.

It is thus evident that the princely and other hill areas of Himachal Pradesh became the scene of the most significant developments. The movement initiated by the various *Praja Mandals* and social organisations gave a new orientation to the 'Himachali' nationalism. It made the authorities more conscious of their responsibilities towards their subjects, and thus influenced their policy towards the various socio-economic problems of the hill people.

The English educated class which was fast assuming the leadership of the people of the princely states, became conscious of the ills from which the hill people were suffering and initiated efforts for remedying the same. Assured of the support from an influential section of the society, the British Government, as also the princes of the hill states, came forward with measures for social reform. These associations therefore, prepared the ground for social legislation. The efforts of the social reform organisations and the pressure of the public opinion gradually 'forged a new angle of vision' for the hill people of Himachal Pradesh.⁵⁵

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- (1) Ram Singh Pathania got help from Parbodh Chand (grandson of Maharaja Sansar Chand of Kangra), the rulers of Jaswan, Guler, Datarpur and the Sikhs. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 194
- (2) For further details see M.L.Ahluwalia, 'Ram Singh Pathania : An unknown hero of the Punjab's freedom struggle during the 19th century' in *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, April, 1975, Patiala, pp. 112-125.
- (3) Mr. Erskine was acting as Superintendent for Hill States.
- (4) He was Mian Sham Singh Pathania. His son Ram Singh Pathania refused to accept the British terms. Consequently, more stringent conditions were imposed on the Nurpur chief by John Lawrence, the Commissioner of Jullundur Doab and Superintendent of Hill States.
- (5) M.L.Ahluwalia, *op.cit.*, 114.
- (6) *Punjab District Gazetteer, Kangra District*, Vol.iii, 1904, p. 41. In the same year (1841) the Rajas of Kangra, Jaswan and Datarpur also revolted against the British but they were defeated. Raja Parbodh Chander was encircled by the British at Sujanpur Tira, captured and was sent to Almora as a political prisoner where he died in 1851. The Rajas of Datarpur and Jaswan also met the same fate. Mian Goverdhan Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 194-95.
- (7) G.C. Barnes, *Kangra Settlement Report*, (Lahore, 1855), p. 14.
- (8) There is a monument at Matti Kot, about two Kms. from Dale Ka Dhar, concerning John Peel, which bears the following inscription:
 'Sacred to the memory of Leit. John Peel, 1st Sikh Local Infantry who succumbed on 17th January, 1849 to wounds received in action near Dallh on 16th January, when engaged with insurgents under Ram Singh....'
 George William De Rhe Phillippe, *List of Inscriptions on Tombs and Monuments in the Punjab, N.W.F. Province, Kashmir, Afghanistan*, (Lahore, 1912), p. 103.
- (9) M.L.Ahluwalia, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17.

- (10) Ibid.; *Foreign Political Consultations*, dated 20 October, 1849, No. 110-18 and dated 2 January, 1857, No. 91-93.
- (11) Mian Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., pp. 194-95.
- (12) There is no doubt that the Raja of Rampur refused to pay the tribute and offered no aid or supplies to the British and even treated the officials travelling through his territories with contempt. However, it can not be assessed, on the basis of the material at our disposal, as to how far the Raja sympathised with the rebels or how far he was inclined to be independent.
- S.K. Gupta, in M.S. Ahluwalia and others, *op.cit.*, pp. 103-04; For details about the revolt of 1857 in Himachal areas of Jutogh, Kasauli, Simla, Kangra and Nurpur see K.C.Yadav, *Revolt of 1857 in Himachal Pradesh* in Proceedings, Punjab History Conference, 1968, pp. 269-77.
- (13) M.S.Ahluwalia and others, *op. cit.*, p. 103. It may, however, be added that a number of rulers of Himachal States, remained loyal to the British and rendered valuable service to the English in curbing the revolt, such as :
- i. Raja Hira Singh of Bilaspur was granted a salute of 11 guns and a valuable *khillat* and other gifts in recognition of his services during the revolt.
 - ii. Raja Sri Singh of Chamba is known to have sent troops to Dalhousie under Mian Autar Singh and kept a careful watch along the frontier for any rebels that might enter the State territory. He apprehended many of them and handed them over to the British authorities.
 - iii. Rana Krishan Singh of Baghal helped the British in keeping guard over the road from Simla to Jullundur, where Bengal regiments had revolted.
 - iv. Rana Goverdhan Singh of Dhami also helped the British. Ibid., pp. 102-3.
- (14) For details about the outbreak of mutiny at Jutogh and Kasauli see *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, part I, pp. 62-64' *Military Consultation*, No. 260, June 19, 1857; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 4-5, July 3, 1857.
- (15) That the Simla hill chiefs remained loyal to the British during the revolt of 1857, is known from a number of instances. When the news spread that the Gurkha regiment stationed at Jutogh had mutinied, and that some of the Gurkhas were coming to loot Shimla, the English men and women received much support from the hill chiefs and given shelter as well as military assistance such as :
- i. Fifty well armed soldiers from Bilaspur were stationed near the Boileauganj bazar, near Simla.
 - ii. Sixty Sirmuri soldiers, under the command of Kanwar Bir Singh, the uncle of Sirmur Raja, were posted in Bara Bazar.
 - iii. Sixty men furnished by Raja of Keonthal, Dhami and Bhajji, were stationed in the immediate vicinity of the Deputy Commissioner's house.

- iv. Besides, Mian Jai Singh of Baghal, the Ranas of Keonthal, Dhami, Koti and Jubbal, with about 250 soldiers remained in Simla to help the British. Mian Goverdhan Singh, op. cit., p. 179.
- (16) For details about the revolt of Mian Partap Singh see *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pp. 208-09; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 33-36, Sept. 25, 1857; Cave-Brown, Vol. I, p.307 cited in K.C. Yadav, *op.cit.*, pp. 273-77.
- (17) Cave-Brown, *Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, pp. 196-202, Vol. II, p.32; *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, part.i, pp.246-265; Cooper, *The Crises in Punjab*, p. 153 cited in K.C. Yadav, *op.cit.*, pp. 272-73.
- (18) They had taken Rs. 200/- from the *tehsildar* and would have probably pillaged the palace but for the adroitness of some of the relatives of the late Raja.
- (19) A Bairagi of Sabathu named Ram Parshad, was arrested on the charge of being the writer of certain seditious letters. He was taken to Ambala and was executed there.
- (20) Raja Hira Chand of Bilaspur was honoured with a salute of 11 guns and *khilat*; Rana Sansar Chand of Keonthal and Rana Kishan Singh of Baghal were awarded with hereditary title of Raja and *khilat*; Thakur Jograj of Baisan was promoted as a Rana and Rana Goverdhan Singh of Dhami was rewarded by a remission, for lifetime, of half the tribute. Akshar Singh, op. cit., p.34 For more details see K.C.Yadav, *op.cit.*, pp.269-77.
- (21) For a detailed study of the Praja Mandal Movement in the East Punjab States, see Ramesh Walia, *Praja Mandal Movement in the East Punjab States*, Patiala, 1972; Ranbir Sharma, *op. cit.*, chapters II,III.
- (22) For details see M.S. Ahluwalia, 'Social Reform Movements in Himachal Pradesh' in S.P. Sen (ed.) *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Calcutta, 1979), pp. 155-65. For more details concerning the Praja Mandal Movement in Himachal Pradesh areas of Bilaspur, Rampur Bushahr, Chamba, Kunihar, Mandi, Sirmur and Suket see Mangla Sharma, *Growth of political consciousness among masses : A case study of Himachal Pradesh*, H.P. University, M.Phil (Pol. Sc.) Dissertation, 1978 (unpublished).
- (23) For Further details see Devi Sharan Sharma, *The Suket Satyagraha: A ca(se)study of civil disobedience movement in a Himalayan State, 1947-48*, H.P. University M. Phil (History) Dissertation, 1982 (upublished).
- (24) *Ibid.*p. 14.
- (25) See *Report of the non-official committee into the tragic happenings of Dhami State*, (30th July, 1939), cited in Ranbir Sharma, *op. cit.*, p.40 fn.1
- (26) Devi Sharan Sharma, *op.cit.*, p.18.
- (27) *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
- (28) *Himalaya Prant Provisional Government File*, (available in the Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee Office, Simla).
- (29) For bringing the socio-economic uplift of the hill people of Himachal Pradesh,

much work was done by reformers like, Pandit Amar Nath Sharma, Kanhaiya Lal Butail, Thakur Hazara Singh, Baba Kanshi Ram, Gopal Singh, Chatur Singh and others.

- (30) Some other important leaders of the Praja Mandal in Sirmur State were Sarvashri Nagendra Singh, Devendra Singh, Rajinder Dutt, Kishan Singh, Hari Chand and Hitendra Singh.
- (31) There were serious rebellions in Suket in 1852, 1876, 1892 and 1924. The famous Mandi conspiracy which took place in 1914-15 under the influence of the Ghadar Party in Mandi further added momentum to the discontentment among the people of Suket. For details see Devi Sharan Sharma, *The Suket Satyagrah: A case study of civil disobedience movement in a Himalayan State, 1947-48* H.P. University, M. Phil Dissertation (unpublished), Simla, 1982.
- (32) For the Praja Mandal activities in the Himachal Pradesh up to 1948 see *infra*, pp.223-25.
- (33) For biographical sketch of Shri Padam Dev and Shri Shiva Nand Ramaul see M.S. Ahulwalia (contributed) *Supplementary Dictionary of National Biography*, Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta, 1988.
- (34) For reasons see Devi Sharan Sharma, *op.cit.*, pp.20-21.
- (35) Raja Lakshman Sen was the last ruler of the Suket State, who ascended the Suket *gaddi* in March 1920, and continued to rule the State till its merger on March 8, 1948, with the Indian Dominion. His reign witnessed the first rebellion in December, 1924, which, however, was suppressed with the help of the British troops from Dharamsala.
- (36) Devi Sharan Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp.22-23.
- (37) Dr. Y.S. Parmar commented on the Suket Satyagrah as 'Never in the history of any *satyagrah* movement had people undertaken struggle without any time for propaganda and preparations.' In the press, the *satyagrah* was described in the following words: 'What the comparatively backward and resourceless people of Suket have accomplished in just seven days in exploding a social order which had the sanctions of centuries behind it, will always remain a source of inspiration to the toiling millions in India in their struggle against feudalism and autocracy.' *The Tribune*, March 7, 1948.
- (38) For Praja Mandal activities in Bilaspur, Bushahr (Rampur), Chamba and Sirmur see Ranbir Sharma, *op.cit.*, pp.28-47.
- (39) R.L. Handa, *History of Freedom Struggle in Princely States* (New Delhi, 1968), pp.88-89.
- (40) The working of the *reet* effected the life of people and resulted in their economic endurances. On the whole marriage in the hills was very loose. Where polyandry was not sanctioned by custom, it was common for a wife to cohabit freely with her husband's brothers. Marriage had no stability, and woman could leave her

husband and find out another mate at any time, and as often as she pleased. Family solidarity was completely broken and a serious problem faced the hillmen. For further details about the system of *reet* and polyandry in the hills, see Y.S. Parmar, *Polyandry in the Himalayas* (Delhi, 1975), pp.170-77.

- (41) Y.S. Parmar, *op.cit.*, p.175.
- (42) *Ibid.*, p.176.
- (43) *Ibid.*
- (44) It was not the rulers alone (like those of Patiala, Bhagat, Jubbal and Sirmur) who had given careful consideration to this custom but individuals and associations of the hills also did so and carried on a vigorous propaganda for its abolition. The first state to legislate on *reet* was the Patiala Darbar in whose territories in the hills this custom was rampant. A circular (No., 12 dated 23rd November, 1912) was issued by the judicial department of the State. Next, the ruler of Bhagat took a severe step and enacted a law for the abolition of the custom of *reet*. The people of the hill region ultimately realised their backwardness and also that their customs were not in conformity with the orthodox Hindu code. Similarly the attitude towards polyandry also underwent a change, and it was no longer held in that esteem which it enjoyed a decade ago. See M.S. Ahluwalia, *Social Reform Movement in Himachal Pradesh* in S.P. Sen (ed) *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Calcutta, 1979), pp.164-65, fn.8.
- (45) M.S. Ahluwalia, *op.cit.*, pp.164-65.
- (46) Satyanand Stokes, *Forced Labour in the Hills, National Self-Realisation and other Essays* (New Delhi, 1975), p.45.
- (47) The tax was imposed on the people of Bilaspur by its chief Raja Vijay Chand but was resisted by the people Akshar Singh, *op.cit.*, p.44.
- (48) *Kar* or *atwara* was free service demanded by the state and given without question by the people. It included service given at the Darbar of the chief by men of various *paraganas* of the state in rotation. The system left much room for abuse. Satyanand Stokes, *op.cit.*, p.45.
- (49) *Ibid.*, p.45.
- (50) Apart from the *athwara begar*, there were three other types of *Begar* which included ordinary *begar*, religious *begar* and petty and occasional labour. See 'Abolition of begar in Punjab Hill States'. Political Department, Government of India, No. 25 (33)p/40 and 52-p.42 (Secret) 1940-42, cited in Ranbir Sharma, *op.cit.* pp.15-16.
- (51) Jai Gopal, The Role and Status of Scheduled Castes in the 19th Century Punjab, *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, Chandigarh, 1973, Vol. II, p.191.
- (52) Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India* (Delhi, 1967), Vol. II, p.255.
- (53) The practice of *sati* was an age-old custom and was prevalent in the hill areas also.

Many *sati* pillars can be seen in Mandi and other areas (R.K. Kaushal, *Himachal Pradesh*, Bombay, 1965, pp.72-74). Frazer has referred to a peculiar type of *sati* practiced in Rampur Bushahr. He states that 22 women became *sati* with the Raja of Bushahr. The number included 2 ministers and one *chobdar* besides 3 queens and 12 *khawasis*. That *sati* practice was in vogue is also confirmed by the travel account left by Vigne (1839) who happened to witness such an event at Mandi. For the relevant account see *Ibid.*, pp.73-74. Fraser and Vigne witnessed the horrible practice of *sati* during their travels in Himachal Pradesh. J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, p.216; 216 G.T. Vigne, *op.cit.*p.82.

- (54) The victim of the practice was kept in a room for at least three days. The blood of the victim was applied to the tongue of Bhima Kali and then it was used to wash the feed of Usha Devi. The head of the victim would be thrown into the Sutlej and the body covered well. Gradually the practice of human sacrifice vanished and it took a different shape, known as the *bhoonda* ceremony, wherein a person if escaped from fatal tests, received honour and state award. For further details see R.K. Kaushal, *op. cit.*, pp.74-75.
- (55) M.S. Ahluwalia, 'Social Reform Movement in Himachal Pradesh' in S.P. Sen (ed). *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Calcutta, 1969), pp. 155-65. For details see also Ranbir Sharma, *op.cit.*, pp.12-27.

CHAPTER-VIII

**THE HILL TRIBES
OF
HIMACHAL PRADESH**

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INTRODUCTORY

The tribes of India, most of whom have remained unique in respect of their culture and traditions, are numerous and some of them are populous. They are generally put under two classes: Those that originally entered India from the northeast by the way of Tibet (and are described as exhibiting the characteristics of the Chinese race) and those who came through the passes of the Himalayas and are generally regarded as of the Aryan origin. *Apart from these two major categories, we have small tribes confessedly of very remote antiquity, which have little or nothing in common with either of the above mentioned two types.*

There are numerous tribes in all parts of the country, but in some states, more than in others, these have striven for ages to keep themselves separate from the main races in the plains. In ancient times they held possession of India, but were gradually driven from the plains into the hilly regions, forests and other inaccessible tracts, which they made their homes, and in which till the present day, they are generally found.

These independent tribes maintain a separate entity and in most cases, maintain little contact with the outside world or other races. One distinguishing feature in respect of these tribes is that while the Hindus

proper, are divided into several castes and are designated as castes and not as tribes, the tribes are rarely spoken of as castes, but always as tribes. At times, encroachments have been made upon them by Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Nevertheless, the fact is that they have more or less, retained their own culture and way of life.

Definition of the Tribe

Unfortunately, neither the Indian constitution nor any government authority has specifically defined the word 'tribe.' Even the dictionaries and the Jurists or scientists and the anthropologists have yet to give a generally acceptable definition of this term. The Hindi equivalent of the term tribe is 'Adim Jati', as per the Hindi version of the Indian Constitution.¹

The present meaning of caste in India, philologically speaking, is taken from the Portuguese origin which appears to be in use before the seventeenth century. However, there is no doubt about its meaning even before 1563, whereas in Latin, Spanish or Portuguese, it is considered as pure, unpolluted, breed or lineage.

Mostly the caste is known as a social organisation based on hierarchical ranking of people determined by birth. The policy adopted by the Dutch, French or British was followed from the Portuguese and there was no alternative but to accept and adopt the already accepted term. The views of the English writers on India were only ranking, based on birth. The tradition of Hindu Brahmin, Vedic texts and *Dharma Sastras* has interpreted the tribe as *varna* and *jati* which is functional, behavioural, social relations with society regulated by birth and heredity.

In the eighteenth century, caste was used synonymous with tribe and it referred to social groups. In Europe the word 'tribe' was used as socio-political evolution of a community of people within a particular territory and language area which represented a progressive march of people towards nationhood. In western world thus it stood for a division of a territory allotted to a family or community. According to Oxford Dictionary its meaning is taken as role of people aggregated in primitive condition under a headman or a chief. In Irish history, the term meant families, communities or persons having the same surname.

The Himachal Hill Tribes

The Himachal hill tribes generally dwell in the upper and middle level of the hill states. In fact the entire Dhauladhar range is the home of tribes. A great majority of the tribes also live in the valleys. In Himachal Pradesh presently the tribes are found in the following districts: 1. Chamba, 2. Kinnaur 3. Kangra 4. Mandi 5. Bilaspur 6. Mahasu 7. Sirmur and 8. Lahul and Spiti.² The largest population of tribals are found in the Chamba district. There the Gujjars, Gaddis and Pangwala tribes live in great majority. The second district of major population of the tribals is Kinnaur. In this district only Kinner tribe resides, whereas in Lahul and Spiti, the name of the tribe is known as Lahula tribe. Thus the two largest tribal populated areas in Himachal Pradesh are Chamba and Kinnaur.³

The Dominant Tribes

The present list of Scheduled tribes in Himachal Pradesh is the result of on the spot studies of these tribes by eminent social scientists and other experts in this field in consultation with the local administrative authorities. The official list includes the following main tribes in Himachal Pradesh.⁴

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Gaddi | 2. Gujjar | 3. Kinners or Kinnaura |
| 4. Lahula | 5. Pangwala | |

Some other minor tribes like Lamba, Khampa and Jads are also found in the Pradesh but not in a great majority and population. However, the above five tribes are considered as the main tribes of Himachal Pradesh.

Sub Tribes and Castes

The above mentioned five major tribes of Himachal Pradesh have sub-castes in their communities. In the first instance, it will be appropriate here to discuss all the Gaddi sub-castes as the Gaddi tribe is a major tribe residing in the Himachal Pradesh. The Gaddi is an occupational name which means shepherd and includes the following sub-castes.⁵

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Brahmans | 2. Khatri | 3. Rajputs |
| 4. Thakurs | 5. Rathis | |

The only endogamous division is Gaddi Brahmins. A Brahmin can marry a Brahmin only. The other *gotras* of the Gaddis intermarry. The sociologists have listed the following exogamous (*gotras*) of the Gaddi Brahmins:

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|---------|
| 1. | Dhaddu | 2. | Makretu | 3. | Bhal | 4. | Dhaneru |
| 5. | Sandan | 6. | Langhe | 7. | Adhkaru | 8. | Lapper |
| 9. | Lunanun | 10. | Buchrenam | 11. | Deoli | 12. | Julkhan |
| 13. | Sulain | 14. | Padly | 15. | Ranghnhan | 16. | Mararu |
| 17. | Baqery and | | | 18. | Rukwal. | | |

This however, is not an exhaustive list of the *gotras* of the Gaddi Brahmins. No male member of a *gotra* can marry a girl from his own *gotra*. The following are the main *gotras* of the Khatri Gaddis:

1. Barsain
2. Bargate
3. Changend
4. Thusra and
5. Bhandu.

Besides not marrying a wife of his own *gotra*, a Khatri Gaddi may not marry a woman of a *gotra* in which he has married a daughter or a sister. The following are the exogamous (*gotras*) of the Rajput Gaddis:⁸

1. Agasni
2. Lalhal

Both *gotras* wear *Janeo*. The following are the *gotras* of the Rathi Gaddis:

1. Gharti
2. Sakhotru
3. Barjati
4. Kulai⁹

Some of the Rathi Gaddis wear *janeo* whereas the others do not.

The Rajas used to confer the *jeneo* on the Rathis in return for presents and service. This is the origin of how some of them started wearing the *janeo*.

The Gujjar is mostly a Mohammadan tribe and essentially nomadic. They are found in many districts of the Himachal Pradesh except Kinnaur and Lahul-Spiti. The Gujjar tribe is mostly found in the

areas of Chamba, Mandi, Bilaspur, Sirmur and Mahasu. Among the Gujar tribes, many are Muslims whereas some are Hindus.¹⁰

It has yet to be ascertained as to how many of these people are still leading a nomadic existence and how many have settled down and what is their religion-wise composition. Among the Hindu Gujjars the following are some of the sub-castes:

1. Khatana
2. Gursi
3. Bhumpal
4. Parswal
5. Malheria
6. Kantiya
7. Chaichi
8. Bargat
9. Chhore
10. Bajar
11. Chohan
12. Katarya
13. Koli
14. Motle
15. Bhunch
16. Kalas
17. Ladichai
18. Badhana¹¹.

According to the 1981 census in Kinnaur, the percentage of scheduled tribes is nearly 69% of the total population. The people of Kinnaur were first designated as scheduled tribes and later on as scheduled and other castes. The native inhabitants of Kinnaur fall into two broad categories. They are locally known as Khasia¹² Rajput and Beru (Harijans). The Rajputs (or scheduled castes of Kinnaur) were formerly known as Kanaits and Jads. The Kanaits still consider to be a matter of pride to be addressed as such. They have been constituting the highest rung of social ladder since times immemorial.¹³

The Jads now prefer to be addressed as Rajputs or Kanauras. Many of the Kanaits and Jads now have added the suffix of Negi after their names. Almost every Kanaura outside Kinnaur, irrespective of his religion or caste discloses himself as Negi. The scheduled castes and Harijans include the castes of Chamangs, Damangs, Ores, and Kolis. In some of the Kinnaur villages, Kolis are known as the Dakes, as they play upon *dakang*, an instrument played upon to propitiate the deity.¹⁴

The occupation of the Chamangs are of making shoes and weaving woolen cloth. The Damangs are primarily blacksmiths but they also profess goldsmithy. The Ores are the carpenters who are equal in social status with the Domangs. The Chamangs are the lowest rung of the social ladder.¹⁵

The Swanglas, Shipis as well as the Lohars are the principal communities in Lahul. The word used in Lahul for a clan or tribe is *ruc*, which means bone, and as applied to a class denotes those descended from a common ancestor. The tribes and castes in Lahul are distributed by race,

religion and occupation and differ from each other in all these respects. Bodhs are generally of Mongoloid stock and profess Buddhism. Swanglas, Shipis and Lohars are Aryan and their religion is Hinduism.

The Bodhs have been described as Kanet in the records drawn up at the settlements before 1950-51.¹⁷ The change from Kanet to Rajput was made during this settlement. Bodhs are universal in the *Bhaga* and *Chandra* valleys. They appear also in Patan where they are also shadowed by Swangla Brahmins. The Swangla are predominant in Patan valley. Shipi are basically cultivators and are Aryans. They assist Swangla and Bodhs at marriages and funerals and are given food and clothes on these occasions.¹⁸

Lohars are called Gara in local language of Keylong and Khoksar villages, Domba in *Bhaga* and *Chandra* valleys and Lohar in the Patan valley¹⁹. They possess land which was originally given to them by the villagers in consideration of their customary service as blacksmiths. This allotment of land is called grazing.²⁰

The Garas are the local jewellers as well as blacksmiths. Hesis are Mongoloid by origin but over the years have got mixed up. Earlier they were maintained by the Thakurs and were given food while performing domestic service. Babas are basket makers in Patan valley where they own a little land.

The Thakurs claim to have originally come from Bara Banghal. They say that their ancestors came from Bara Banghal as Khana to a ruling family in Todha and settled there. Before the abolition of the *jagirs* they formed the aristocracy of Lahul and considered themselves superior to other Bodhs of the valley. However, now they are also commoners though financially a little better off. Marriages among them are also no longer restricted within the Thakur families. In Spiti there is no such caste distinction as is among the Hindus or the use of the different terms to describe people.²¹

In the Pangi tehsil and the Brahmaur sub-tehsil of the Chamba district, there are scattered cases of families once recorded in the official documents as Brahmins and in case of Brahmaur, as Khatris. Besides these castes, there are general caste classification of the Rajput and some house-hold classes as belonging to some other castes, including a few of what are commonly called as the scheduled castes²².

The Pangwal tribe of Chamba district are divided into two major classes: high castes and lower castes. In the high castes of Pangwal tribe are Brahmins, Rajputs and Rathis and in lower castes are Halis, Lohars and Aryans. No marriage alliance is made within the same caste and castes avoid marriage within the same *gotra*.²³

It may thus be seen that every tribe in Himachal Pradesh has two classes within its community, high and low castes. Apart from this every tribe has some sub-castes and *gotras*. It will be relevant here to discuss each of the most prominent tribes of Himachal Pradesh.

The Gaddi Tribe

Of the various tribes of Himachal Pradesh, the Gaddi tribe is the most dominant one. As compared to all other tribes, the Gaddis are a most populous tribe. The people of this tribe are simple, honest, God fearing and hard working. The Gaddis are a semi-nomadic, semi-pastoral and semi-agricultural tribe. The snowy range that divides the districts of Kangra and Chamba is an exclusive abode of the Gaddis and is popularly known as Gaderen.

According to the traditional accounts, the Chauhan Rajputs and the Gaddis accompanied Raja Ajay Verma (king of Chamba in 760 A.D.) to Chamba in 750-70 A.D. At a much later date, the Charahan, Harkhan, Pakhru, Chibdi, Manglu and Kundail Rajputs and the Khatri are said to have fled to the Chamba hills to escape emperor Aurangzeb's wrath. According to another tradition, Brahmaur, the ancient Brahmputra, is the home of the Gaddis.²⁴

As a nomadic tribe, the Gaddis spend half of the year in their villages cultivating their fields and the remaining half is spent in migration in search of grass and fodder for their herd and seasonal employment for themselves. They are simple, fierce, virtuous and live in a joint family. The women folk are pleasing, comely and seem to have strict moral codes as they have a reputation of being modest and extremely chaste.

The Gaddis follow patriarchal and patrilineal types of family system. The real nomadic life of the Gaddis can be observed when they are in migration with their flocks. During journey (with his limited

articles like a *hukka*, a *khalru* of cereals and other essential articles such as utensils) a Gaddi cooks simple food, consisting of flour bread, *masuri dal* or some vegetables if available. Sometimes only salt, green chillies and raw onions fill the plates.²⁵

The Gaddi women keep their hair long which they part in the centre and tie in a long braid at the back to keep the hair in a place. There are number of very thin plats which are joined with the main braid. The braid is further augmented with a cotton or silken *puranda*. The Gaddi women love jewellery which is a sign of their prosperity too. The common ornaments are chaunk, chirri, clip, pherballi, jhumkas, dhodky, bundal, litkani, chalik, kante or karibali, nose ring and so on. They are either made of gold or silver.²⁶

The Gaddi women wear *chola* and *dora* in their daily life. Nudity is not allowed within or outside the house. Generally all members of the household take their dinner together when all of them are present at home. The morning break-fast called *nuhari* includes Maize or wheat bread, dal or vegetable, with tea or *gur*. The lunch called *dufari* includes maize or wheat bread with *Masri* dal. Some times rice or *chana* is also included in the menu. The evening meal called *sanja* can include meat on some occasions.²⁷

The Gaddis believe that a child is the gift of Lord Shiva. Abortion is considered a sin and artificial methods of family planning are not favoured. A male child is preferred who is considered to be a helper in old age. There is no restriction on the movement of a pregnant woman. When the child is born, a man is sent with *drub* to the mother's parents who receive him cordially and offer him *gur* and a rupee.²⁸

The Gaddis do not marry in their own brotherhood. Marriage is permitted simultaneously with two real sisters. A trustworthy man is sent to the bride's people to fix a day for *mangani*. Some *gur*, *chana* and *supari* are presented to parents and the offering is then stuck or tapped by the *purohit* with a grind stone which signifies the acceptance of the present and the offer of marriage.²⁹ Some folk songs are also sung by the village women in the various ceremonies connected with the marriage.

The Gaddis burn their dead. The body is placed on the funeral pyre with the head of the deceased to the north and all the jewellery and

the blanket which is thrown over it when the bier are taken off and the body burnt.³⁰

The ashes of the deceased are collected after three days. The parcel is placed in an earthen vessel and deposited in a recess made in a wall of the house until sufficient money is saved to take the remains to Haridwar. While the parcel is in the house a lamp is lit for a short time each night and each morning and some water is daily sprinkled about³¹.

The Gaddis are worshippers of Lord Shiva but also propitiate their deities and spirits by sacrificing sheep and goats. The tribe follows Hindu tradition and religion in its own way. The supreme deity of the Gaddis is Lord Shiva. A folklore on Shiva goes:

'The Gaddi was grazing his folk
 The Gaddan offered incense to Shiva,
 To the Gaddi he gave sheep
 and to the Gaddan beauty.'

Apart from Shiva, on Sundays and Thursdays the Gaddis also worship Nags and Sidha; on Sunday alone Kailung, Devi on Tuesday and Birs on Thursday. The Gaddis also believe in several evil spirits. These are known as Avtars which are spirits raised to the level of local deities out of fear and awe. An Avtar is the spirit of a person who died issueless. To scare away the ghost, *nawala* is performed. Goats are also sacrificed to please the spirits.³²

The Gujjars

The Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh fall in the Hindu community as well as in the Muslim community. Gujjars are one of the tribes of Himachal Pradesh who live in jungles, villages or in the valleys for a temporary period and then move to another place in search of grass for their cattle. In summer they live in higher altitudes and in the winter season, when there is heavy snow, they move to the plains.

A majority of the Gujjar tribe is leading a nomadic life. The people of this tribe are very brave, strong, hard-working, peace-loving, polite, social and hospitable. They live in a joint family. The Gujjars are predominantly a Rajput community.³³

The main occupation of the Gujjar tribe, like the Gaddis, is rearing cattle, which is also their main source of income and livelihood. Financially they are not very low. However, they are more or less rooted to their own old customs and do not favourably respond to the changes that are taking place in the modern age.

As the Gujjar tribe fall in both Hindu and Muslim communities, they follow both the Hindu as well as the Muslim religions. The people of this tribe are very pious in nature. The Muslim Gujjars believe in *dozakh* and *jannat*. They believe that *namaz* should be performed five times a day and that one should be faithful to one's religion.

The diet of the Gujjars, like the other tribes of Himachal Pradesh, is simple. They take maize, milk, ghee and milk-made products in their meal. Meat is also used occasionally. The birth of a child is considered a gift of *Allah* and is a matter of joy for the whole family. Mostly the Gujjars can be recognised from their beard and dress. The male gujjars wear a Kashmiri type of shirt and Punjabi type *tambā*. The female wear *payjama* and loose shirts and a long piece of cotton cloth which covers their head. They use silver ornaments also, which include necklace and *kangan* etc. They also wear large rings in the ears tied to long chains dangling down their shoulders.³⁴

As mentioned earlier the Muslim Gujjars often lead an unsettled pastoral life. They move upto the higher hills in summer in search of good grazing lands. In winter they move down to the lower hills. Many of them do not build any permanent settlement and live on the out-skirts of the forests, where they graze their animals.

The Hindu Gujjars, however, are agriculturists and many of them have settled permanently. Though they depend mostly on agriculture, the rearing of cattle is also done but only to supplement their income.³⁵ The Gujjars' staple diet is simple but nourishing. It is surprising that a vast majority neither use any beverage nor any other stimulant.³⁶

The Gujjars are known for walking long distances. Without any rest, they can walk many kilo-meters along with their luggage and animals. They are called the masters of negotiating dangerous routes through deep forests. They do not fear the wild animals but very much

fear the forest officers who tax them heavily for grazing in the government lands.

The Gujjar tribe is strictly endogamous.³⁷ Marriage among the Gujjars is considered a necessity for all. They consider marriage as sacred unlike other Muslims, who consider marriage as a contract. There is a complete absence of polyandry among the Gujjars which is otherwise commonly practised by the other tribes.³⁸

The types of marriage among the Gujjar tribe are varied and many. The following types of marriages are in vogue among the members of this tribe:

(1) ***Marriage by purchase***

The fixing of the price of a bride is a common practice among this tribe. It is in the range of Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 7,000. The full price goes to the father of the girl.

(2) ***Bata-sata type of marriage***

It is marriage by exchange and is also common among the Gujjars. It may be a parallel or triangular. In this system a man can marry another's sister in exchange of his sister who marries with that man.

(3) ***Marriage by Service***

In this type of marriage, the girl's father demands service from the boy in order to get his daughter as a wife. The period of service varies from six to seven years. The boy is expected to stay in the girl's house with the other members of the family and help the family in various routines of life.

(4) ***Ghar Jawain***

Another interesting institution of marriage among the Gujjar tribe is known as *ghar jawain*. The son-in-law is virtually adopted by the kins of the wife. This is usually done when a father does not get a son to inherit his cattle wealth or is rich

enough to part with a portion of his cattle wealth to a *ghar-jawain*.³⁹

The Gujjars are very pious as a tribe. The Muslim Gujjars believe that the dead-rest in the graves and appear in front of the land on the doom's-day. Then they will be rewarded or punished according to their past deeds. They also believe that the *Allah* or *Khuda* creates the world and sky. Like other Muslims, the Gujjar Muslims celebrate festivals like *Id* and *Muharram* etc.

The Hindu Gujjars are mostly found in the Mandi and Bilaspur districts, Paonta tehsil of Sirmur district and Kangra district. They follow the Hindu religion and social ceremonies and beliefs.⁴⁰

The Kinner tribe

The name of the district Kinnaur appears to have been derived from the principal tribe Kinner inhabiting this area. The Kinner tribe finds a place in Hindu mythology also. In Sanskrit literature, Kinners have been shown as *Yakshas* and *gandharvas*.⁴¹

Modern researches describe the Kinners as a mixed race. Those who conform to Hindu observances are called the Khasiyas. Some inter-mixture of the Khasias with the Tibetans has undoubtedly taken place in Kinnaur apart from Kangra and Kulu hills. In the Himalayan districts there is practically no historical evidence of Khasa immigration and it can not be said as to when and how they came to occupy these hills.⁴²

The present population also includes the descendants of the Rajputs and Brahmins. The Khasiyas of Himachal represent by far the purest Khasa blood and have on the whole Aryan features and speak an Aryan language. That these Khasiyas are the same people called Khasa in the ancient Sanskrit texts, can not be doubted. It is sufficient to say that the Khasias settled in these hills appear to represent an early wave of the Aryan immigrants, or a people whose features and language was much like those of the Aryans.

Indigenously, there were only two terms-the Khasiya and the Chamang. No body knew other terms but with the advance of the

modernised administration, government servants and other functionaries habitually given training elsewhere to search for certain castes, arrived from outside with pre-conceived notions of categories and castes, learnt from different kinds of societies outside Kinnaur. They equated Khasiya with such terms as Kanet/Rajput and Chamang as Koli, both are Kinners/Kinnaruas/Kanauras and both have a common overall, similarity and identity in social patterns, in dress and other modes of living.⁴³

The Kinners are primarily agriculturists. Their other subsidiary occupations are grazing, weaving, spinning, silver smithing wood-carving and artistic metal-ware manufacturing. Agricultural operations being uneconomic, the people naturally take to trade. Earlier they used to visit Tibet when trade with Tibet was open. The women work very hard. The habits of these people are simple and their needs are limited.⁴⁴

The people of Kinnaur usually take drinks mainly at their festivals, which take place almost every month. In those festivals, the Kinners have all sorts of amusements such as horse races, foot-races, performance of all manner of buffoonery, feats of agility, dancing and singing etc.⁴⁵

In upper Kinnaur, dominated by the Lama cult,⁴⁶ the Lama makes a charm and hangs it around the neck of a pregnant woman, mostly written in the Tibetan language on a *bhojapatra*. When a son is born, adoration is made to the Goddess *Dolma* and a chant called *bhum chang* is read by the *Lama* which means 'May God bless the child'.

When the boy of the Kinner tribe is one year old, his head is shaved and the *Lama* performs the ceremonies of *hom puja* or *paih*. A *kantly* or *kanthi* (an ordinary necklace) is put around the neck of the child when he is eight years old, as the Kinners, do not, as a rule, wear the sacred thread.⁴⁷

The staple food of the Kinner tribe is *olgo*, *bras* and barley, *shag*, *rad*, *kodro* and *dankhar*. Wheat and maize are also eaten. Meals are taken thrice a day, in the morning, noon and at night. These are called *samchu khau*, *shil* and *shupakchu-Khau* respectively.⁴⁸

The Kinners usually put on locally woven woolen clothes and are as well clad as they can be. Men wear *chamu kurti*, *chhaka*, *chamau*

suthan. *Chamu kurti* is stitched by the local tailors. The garment is what may be called a shirt. *Chhaka* is like a coat. *Chamu suthan* is a woollen payjama. It may be slightly loose or *churidar* (tight), mostly grey.⁴⁹

The women's garments includes *dhoti* that folds partly round the body and partly around the shoulders and across the breast. The *choli* is an upper garment akin to a full sleeved blouse. *Chhanli* is what may be called a shawl. It is wrapped round the shoulders and its two ends are fastened together near the breast by means of a silver hook called *digra*. Women often wrap around their waist *gachchang* i.e. a scarlet coloured woollen or cotton cloth of about five to eight metres in length, and about a meter in breadth.⁵⁰

The women of the tribe earlier used to wear heavy jewellery like thick bracelets, large ear-rings, heavy silver chains and various kinds of beads and precious stones but presently there is a growing tendency among them to use comparatively lighter ornaments.⁵¹

There are four major forms of marriage among the Kinners:

1. *Janekang* or *janetong* i.e. common arranged marriage.
2. *Damachalshish* or *damtangshish* or *bennag* i.e. a love-marriage.
3. *Darosh* or *dabdoh* i.e. marriage by forceful or consented capture.
4. *Har* i.e. enticing away someone else wife.⁵²

Since times immemorial, the Kinners practised polyandry as a system of marriage. It is possible that this system invaded from neighbouring Tibet with which these people had age long ties. It is also believed that this system is a device to avoid division of property and fragmentation of already small holdings in this area. The practice, however, is on the decline in these days due to outside influences and socio-economic development.⁵³

The Kinners are rapidly abandoning the old death rites, like *dabant* (drowning), *phukant* (burning) and *bhakant* (i.e. leaving the dead-body of a person to be eaten by vultures and birds) etc. Presently the

people mostly burn the dead bodies and the ashes are taken to Mansorover (in Tibet), to Rawalsar in Mandi or to the Ganga in Haridwar. Three days after the death there is a ceremony called *chholpa*.⁵⁴

On the 13th day, a death ceremony locally called *damkochang* (something like *kirya*) is performed and *puja* is offered by a Brahmin or a Lama depending upon the family inclination towards Hinduism or Lamaism.

In matters of religion, a majority of Kinners are Buddhists. They have adopted this religion especially in the northern half of the Chini subdivision under the influence of the Tibetans. Almost every village has a Buddhist temple where a Lama worships and stays. The Kinners, however, also believe in various Hindu Gods like Badrinath, Maheshwar and Bhagwati. They also observe untouchability like the Hindus. Worship of Ganesh, Rama or Krishna is almost unknown to the Kinner tribe.⁵⁵ In many areas, however, Buddhism as well as Hinduism are practised side by side. Thus Kinners are also recognised as Hindu by descent although by profession they generally follow the Lama faith. No Brahmin has ever settled in this district inhabited by the Kinners.

The Lahuli Tribe

The district of Lahul and Spiti, which is one of the border districts of Himachal Pradesh, is inhabited by an autonomous tribal community called the Lahulis. According to the anthropologists, the Lahulis have been living on this remote plateau for the past five hundred years with almost the same number of tribals.⁵⁷

The district inhabited by the Lahuli tribe is surrounded by Ladakh on the north, Chamba on the west, Bara Banghal and Kulu on the south and Rampur Bushahr on the east. The main entrance to Lahul is through the Rohtang Pass at a height of 13,400 feet and to Spiti through Kunzum pass at a height of 15,500 feet.

The Lahulis who inhabit in both Lahul and Spiti region include the following castes which can be placed into two categories:

1. *Upper class*: Includes Brahmins, Rajputs, Thakurs and the Rathis.

2. *Lower class:* Includes Halis, Lohars and Bhots.

All the above mentioned castes are endogamous. The Rajputs inter-marry with the Rana families in the Ravi valley and latter with the Thakurs and Rathis.

The Lahulis are honest, peace-loving and hospitable. They are quite healthy and robust. Although basically they are agriculturists but they also carry on subsidiary occupations of mule rearing, spinning and weaving. The Lahulis are also commercial minded because of their age-old trade with Tibet in the past. The mainstay of the economy of the Lahulis is agricultural labour, pony-transport, government and private service and customary services like black-smithy and carpentry etc.⁵⁸

Among the Lahulis, joint family system is predominant. The joint families are simple or polyandrous in composition. Among the members of this tribe, no birth customs are observed except *gotsi*. Normally when a son is born in a family all the villagers go to that house and offer flowers or *chhang*. After some time a feast is arranged and a *mundan* ceremony takes place after the boy is one year old.⁵⁹

The Lahuli men wear a white or brown coloured *kattar*, i.e. a short or long and loose Tibetan gown made of pure woolen *patti* whereas the younger generation has started wearing a coat. In winter, a *kurti* (a sort of a Nehru Jacket) made of woolen *patti* is generally worn. Brown colour Kulu cap called *tobry* is a common head-gear. *Sutna*, a tight trouser of *patti* cloth is used to cover the lower part of the body.⁶⁰

The Lahuli women are used to wear black coloured *sutna* which resembled its counterpart worn by men, except that it is comparatively tight with a line of golden or silver embroidery in the lower parts. *Kurti* is a full sleeved shirt and *choly* is a full sleeved long gown of cotton cloth in summer and of *patti* in winter is the familiar dress of the womenfolk of the Lahuli tribe. The women of this tribe, like other tribal women, are fond of wearing ornaments of gold or silver according to their economic status.⁶¹

The food of the Lahuli tribe mainly includes maize or wheat flour, *masuri dal*, vegetables (if available), meat, milk, and milk products

and fruits available in the region.⁶² The Lahulis are non-vegetarians and also do not consider any food or drink as tabooed. Local name for wine is *lugri*.

Polyandry is all pervasive among the Lahuli tribes. This is the most important single factor responsible for the predominance of the joint family system in Lahul.⁶³ Early marriages are by no means the rule and in some places the young men are not married, before they are at least twenty years old. Under the polyandrous system, it is only the eldest brother who is ceremonially married and his younger brothers automatically become co-husbands on attaining adulthood.⁶⁴

It is surprising that the Lahulis are not monogamous like their neighbours, the Pangwals, but a polyandrous tribe. They follow a modified form of polyandry which is prevalent in Chamba-Lahul. At the time of marriage, the younger brother of the bridegroom also presents one rupee to the bride's mother which establishes his right as a second husband. But more than two brothers are not admissible as co-husbands.⁶⁵

In Lahul, there are two types of marriages: *tabhagston* and *kumai bhagston*, i.e. an arranged and big marriage and a marriage by theft respectively. In the first type the marriage negotiations for betrothal is conducted by the father and the maternal uncle of the boy, who personally go to the parents of the girl and take with them a pot of *chhang* or a bottle of arrack. The negotiations proceed and than a final date of marriage is fixed.⁶⁶

In the second type of marriage (i.e. marriage by theft) the boys and girls are given freedom of choice without the interference of the parents. After the boy has made his choice, he proposes to the girl. If the girl agrees, the boy gives her some money and the marriage is settled. On a fixed day, the boy with a small party reaches the girl's village and the bridegroom from the party forcibly carries the girl away on his back and the elopement is complete.⁶⁷

Both Hinduism and Buddhism are the dominant religions in Lahul and Spiti. The Hinduism is the leading religion in Lahul sub-division, while Buddhism predominates in the Spiti sub-division. Even the Hindus visit the Buddhist monasteries and offer worship. These monasteries are in great number, particularly in the Spiti valley. The

people have their annual fairs round these monasteries and other *devta* temples.⁶⁸

The *Lamas* stay in the monasteries. All younger sons in the Spiti valley become *Lamas*. The *Lamas* of Lahul have no recognised head but those of Spiti (in which district Buddhism has been longer in existence) are under the authority of a primitive styled head, Gelong.⁶⁹ The nuns also stay in the monasteries. Every woman or girl among the Buddhists has the right or privilege to become a nun.⁷⁰ Some *devta* temples are also found in the Lahul and Spiti districts which shows their love for Hindu gods also. However, the dominant religion in the district is Buddhism.⁷¹

The Pangwals

The Pangwal tribe inhabit the snow-bound areas of the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. They are simple, religious-minded, hard working and honest. They are known to lead a peaceful life of their own without much of an interaction with the outside world. Even at the close of the present century, the Pangwals are conservative in their beliefs and customs, which is partly due to the geographical situation of the region⁷² where these people reside.

The family traditions of the Pangwals show that they have emigrated from various parts of the hills, some from the Chenab and the Ravi valleys, others from Lahul and Kulu. The occupation of the tribals is generally farming but a few rear sheep and goats too.⁷³

Due to heavy snow-fall, there is an acute shortage of cereals in the Pangi valley and hence the Pangwals do not clean wheat and grind it with chaff. The bread seems to be prepared from grass which can not satisfy their hunger. The staple foodgrains are barley, *elo* (rye), wheat, *suil* and *chana*. In times of scarcity, certain grasses and roots, such as *kangash*, *chukri* etc., are also pressed into the dietary service, compounded with the flour of some cereal. Meat is eaten chiefly in winter but on some special occasions, being too dear for common use.

Marriage is considered as an essential institution among the Pangwals. The Pangwals do not marry kinsmen within five degrees on the mother's and ten on the father's side. The observances at betrothal are simple. The boy's father goes to the bride's house and initiates negotia-

tions. If the girl's parents consent, the boy's father presents the girl's father with a rupee as a part of an observance called *bhakki diti*. The boy's father again goes to the girl's house within a year to confirm the alliance and this is known as *chakkani* i.e. to eat food. The boy presents the girl with a pair of ear-rings (*balu*) and bracelet (*kangan*) which are collectively called *bandha* and the observance is called *bandhadena*. The betrothal may be allowed at any age.⁷⁴

There are two forms of marriages prevalent among the Pangwals: First *jangi* and second *topi lani*. The former is considered to be a superior one in which the boy's maternal uncle goes to the girl's house and fixes the day of marriage. The second type of marriage is practised only in case of a widow-remarriage. The brother of the late husband of a widow can marry her but if a stranger wishes to marry her he is bound to obtain the consent of her parents who may demand some money as bride price. The ceremony is called *randi rakhi lai*.⁷⁵

There are also some other kinds of marriages prevalent among the Pangwals such as marriage by exchange, by service or by capture. Monogamy is the general rule, but the instances of polygamy are also found. A woman is free to obtain a divorce if she is not satisfied with her husband. The divorce is granted by breaking a stick over the woman's head by the husband. Thereafter she is free to marry anyone.⁷⁶

The Pangwal male members wear woolen *Payjama*, shirt, white cap of long cloth and *pulans* (straw shoes). The females wear shirt, tight dark coloured trousers, a woolen shawl on the shirt and a cap of cloth locally known as *jali*. The tailors are local inhabitants and they have skill only in making of local dresses.⁷⁷

Both the Pangwal male and female put on some ornaments. Due to poverty, however, the number of items is restricted to only a few. Certain ornaments are locally called by different names. For example *bal* (nose ornament) is called *karu* while *nanti* (ornament for ear of men) is also known as *murki*. Silver ornaments are more common and the ornaments differ from individual to individual.⁷⁸

The death observances among the Pangwal tribe are simple. Lepers and children under a year old are buried lying on the back with their hands folded on the breast, and their head to the north. All other dead

bodies are burnt and the ashes are collected the same day. The pyre (*chi*) may be made of any kind of wood. A year after the death, the death ceremony takes place.

The Pangwals are god fearing and superstitious tribe. They believe in Hindu gods and goddesses. Their chief gods are Devi, Nag and Shiva to whom they worship before venturing into any new work. There are a number of temples and religious shrines in the Pangwal area. The principal Devi temple is at Mindhal and is called Mindhal Basan Devi. The temples are specially visited in full moon of *Bhadon*, *Asuj* and *Jeth*.⁷⁹ Apart from Mindhal temple, Sita Devi at Luj and Mirkula Devi at Udaipur are other important temples. There is another beautiful temple at Triloknath where the pilgrims go in the month of *Kartik*. Lord Shiva is worshipped on any day of the week. The tribals also believe in evil spirits and appease them. A goat or sheep is sacrificed as most of the Gods are held to be non-vegetarians.⁸⁰

Among the important fairs and festivals celebrated by the Pangwals, mention may be made specially of *bishu* or *bisoa* on the first *Baisakh*; *antrain* or *maghi* on first *Magh*; *khaul* or the *Puranmasi* or full moon of *Magh*; *shorach* or *Shivaratri*; and *Sil Mela* observed on the new moon after *Shivaratri*. *Jitras* are observed in the month of *phalgun*. At the fairs drunken-ness is a very common sight.⁸¹

It will thus be seen that the majority of the scheduled tribes of Himachal Pradesh live in the Chamba, Lahul-Spiti and Kinnaur districts of the state. In the last two districts, the percentage of these tribes to total population (1981 census) is 31.01% and above. The major tribes such as the Gaddis, Gujjars, Kinners, Lahulas and Pangwals, are further subdivided into several sub-castes. There are also some minor tribes like Lamba, Khampa and Jads, inhabitating the state.

Among the tribes of Himachal, the two most dominant are the Gujjars and the Gaddis, both of whom are semi-nomadic and semi-pastoral tribes. The Gujjars fall in both Hindu and Muslim communities, each following its own religion, customs and beliefs. The Gujjars are spread over the entire tribal belt of Himachal Pradesh, whereas the Gaddis are residing exclusively in the snowy ranges which separate Chamba from Kangra.

The aborigines of the Pangi valley in the Chamba district are called 'Pangwals' just as the inhabitants of Lahul-Spiti are called Lahulis and those of Kinnaur are called Kinners. The Pangwals, Lahulis and Kinners include both upper classes such as the Brahmins, Thakurs, Rajputs and Rathis, as well as lower castes such as Halis, Lohars and Bhots etc.

A majority of the Himachal tribes are still leading a semi-pastoral and semi-agricultural life. The major part of the life of these tribes, particularly of the Gujjars and Gaddis, is spent in rearing of sheep and goats, which is their main occupation. Joint family system is still followed by most of these tribes and polyandry is also fairly prevalent among some of these tribes.

It is only hoped that the major problems of these simple, hard-working and honest tribes, still inhabiting the inaccessible mountains and jungles of Himachal Pradesh, are solved through a time bound programme and their standard of living is improved according to the time.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- (1) For definition of the word 'Tribe' see also T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh : A Profile* (Simla, 1976), pp. 160-69.
- (2) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal: Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971) p.71.
- (3) T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, (Shimla, 1976), pp. 7-8.
- (4) T.S. Negi, 'Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh' in *Tribal Situation in India*, (Simla, 1972), p.142.
- (5) T.S. Negi, (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Chamba*, (Ambala Cantt. 1971), p.203.
- (6) For an account of the Brahmin in relation to the past, the present and the future, of the genealogy of the Brahmancial tribes, the classification of the *gotras* or orders, their observance of the Vedic rituals, their divisions into the clans, their six special duties, of the religious ceremonies of the Brahmins, of the 'Nakshatras' and of principal divisions of the Brahmins, see M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. II (Delhi, 1974), p. IXX.
- (7) Edward O' Brien and M.Morris, *Punjab Ethnography Monograph No. II, The Kangra Gaddis*, Lahore, 1900, p.1.
- (8) Edward O' Brien and M.Morris, *op.cit.*, p.2
- (9) *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4
- (10) T.S. Negi, 'Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh', in '*Tribal Situation in India*' (Simla, 1972), p. 145.
- (11) S.S. Shashi, *Nomades of the Himalayas* (Delhi, 1979), p.26.
- (12) The antiquity of the Khasas in the Himalayan districts including Himachal hills, is accepted by the eminent scholar Sir G.R. Grierson. He observes that:
 'The great mass of the Aryan speaking population of the lower Himalaya from Kashmir to Darjeeling is inhabited by tribes descended from the ancient Khasas of

- the *Mahabharata*. *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IX, prt. IV, p.8; L.D. Joshi, *Tribal People of the Himalayas*. (Delhi, 1984), p.16; M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. III (Delhi, 1979), p.4.
- (13) T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Kinnaur* (Batala, 1963), p. 76.
- (14) S.S. Chib, *Kanauras of the trans-Himalayas* (Delhi, 1984), p.95.
- (15) *Ibid*
- (16) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahul and Spiti*, (Chandigarh, 1975), p.60.
- (17) M.A. Sherring, *op.cit.*, Vol. III, p.45.
- (18) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahaul and Spiti*, p.60; T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, pp. 66-96.
- (19) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahul and Spiti*, (Chandigarh, 1975), p.61.
- (20) M.A. Sherring, *op.cit.*, p.8
- (21) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahul & Spiti*, p.62.
- (22) T.S. Negi, 'Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh' in *Tribal Situation in India*, (Simla, 1972), p.144.
- (23) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Chamba*, (Ambala, 1971), p.205.
- (24) H.A.Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes*, Vol. II, (Delhi, 1980),p.256.According to another tradition, the Gaddis' ancestors were Khatri traders of Lahore in the time of some *Muhammadan* king, perhaps Aurangzeb, who attempted to convert them to his religion. It appears that out of fear many left the city and came to a place called Brahmaur in Chamba territory and squatted at the *gaddi*(or *baithak*) of a Hindu *faqir*. There they started attending to their flocks of sheep and goats. Some of them went to the Kangra district and a few migrated to the Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. Edward O' Brien and M. Morris, *Punjab Ethnography*, monograph No. II (Lahore, 1900), p.12.
- (25) S.S. Shashi, *The Nomades of the Himalayas* (Delhi, 1979) p. 90; *Ibid, Himachal: Nature's peaceful Paradise*(Delhi, 1971), p.93; T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh: A Profile*(Simla, 1976), pp. 137-44.
- (26) T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh* (Simla, 1976), p. 141.
- (27) S.S. Shashi, *Gaddi Tribes of Himachal Pradesh* (Delhi, 1977), p. 51.
- (28) T.S. Negi, *op.cit.*, p.173
- (29) Edward O: Brien and M. Morris, *Punjab Ethnography*, monograph No. 11, *The Kangra Gaddis*, (Lahore, 1900), p.19.

- (30) H.A. Rose, *op.cit.*, p.268.
- (31) Edward O' Brien and M.Morris, *op.cit.*, p.23.
- (32) T.S. Negi, (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Chamba*, (Batala, 1963), p.173. See also Ghanasham Dass, *Institution of Devta: A Study in Social and Political Interactions in a Kullu Village*, H.P. University M.Phil (Pol. Sc.) Dissertation, 1985 (unpublished).
- (33) S.S. Shashi, *The Nomades of the Himalayas*, (Delhi, 1979), p.20; T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh: A Profile*, (Simla, 1976), pp. 114-36.
- (34) T.S. Negi, *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Sirmur*, (Aligarh, 1969), p.84.
- (35) *Ibid.*, p.84.
- (36) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal: Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.104.
- (37) S.S. Shashi, *Nomades of the Himalayas*, (Delhi, 1979), p.25.
- (38) T.S. Negi, *op.cit.*, p.125.
- (39) For a detailed discussion about the marriage and other social ceremonies see T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Sirmur* (Aligarh, 1969), S.S. Shashi, *Himachal: Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, Delhi, 1971; *Nomades of the Himalayas*, Delhi, 1979; K. Suresh Singh, (ed.) *Tribal Situation in India*, Simla, 1972; L.D. Joshi, *Tribal People of the Himalayas*, Delhi, 1984.
- (40) T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, (Simla, 1976), pp. 124-25.
- (41) Some are of the view that the name Kinner was given to that tribe which like Tibetans had very thin grounds of moustaches and beard (S.S. Chib, *This Beautiful India, Himachal Pradesh*, Delhi, 1977, p.101). In Sanskrit 'Ki-nara' means, Are you a man? asked in a satirical way to those who grow a very thin beard. Vanshi Ram Sharma, *Kinner Lok Sahitya* (Hindi), Chandigarh, 1976, p.7.
- (42) L.D. Joshi, *Tribal People of the Himalayas* (Delhi, 1984), pp. 17-18.
- (43) T.S. Negi, 'Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh' in *Tribal Situation in India*, (Simla, 1972), p. 143.
- (44) T.S. Negi, (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Kinnaur*, (Batala, 1963), p. 88.
- (45) S.S. Chib, *op.cit.*, p. 106; T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, pp. 11-66.
- (46) J.B. Fraser, *op.cit.*, pp. 114-15.
- (47) T.S. Negi, 'Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh' in *Tribal Situation in India*, (Simla, 1972), p.153.

- (48) For further details see, S.C. Bajpai, *Kinnaur in the Himalayas* (Delhi, 1981), p.16.
- (49) T.S. Negi, *Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, (Simla, 1976), p.37.
- (50) S.C. Bajpai, *op.cit.*, p.15
- (51) *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
- (52) S.S. Chib, *Kanauras of the trans-Himalayas*, (Delhi, 1984), p. 112.
- (53) *Ibid.*, p.89.
- (54) T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Kinnaur*, p.89. For details concerning various ceremonies and customs connected with the tribals of Kinnaur see also S.S. Charak, *History and Culture of the Himalayan States*, Vol. III, *Himachal Pradesh*, Part-III, (Delhi, 1979), pp. 6-13.
- (55) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.113.
- (56) For further details about the Kinner tribe see, S.S. Chib, *This Beautiful India, Himachal Pradesh*, Delhi, 1977; T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Kinnaur*, Batala, 1963; Vanshi Ram Sharma, *Kinner Lok Sahitya* (Hindi), Chandigarh, 1976; L.D. Joshi, *Tribal People of the Himalayas*, Delhi, 1984; T.S. Negi, 'The Tribal Situation in Himachal Pradesh' in *Tribal Situation in India , Simla, 1972 and Scheduled Tribes of Himachal Pradesh*, Simla, 1976; S.C. Bajpai, *Kinnaur in the Himalayas*, Delhi, 1981; H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1980; M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, 3 Vols, Delhi, 1974 and *Tribes and Castes of the Himalayan Districts of Kooch, Lahaul and Spiti*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1979.
- (57) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.126.
- (58) D.N. Dhir, 'Tribes on the North Western Border of India' in *Tribal Situation in India*, (Simla, 1978), p.13.
- (59) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahul and Spiti*, (Chandigarh, 1975), p.63.
- (60) *Gazetteer of the Kangra District*, Vol. XXX-A, *Kulu, Lahul and Spiti* (Lahore, 1918), p.209; Harcourt *op.cit.*, p.43.
- (61) M.S. Randhawa, *Travels in the Western Himalayas*, (Delhi, 1974), p.200.
- (62) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.128; Moorcroft, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 180-81.
- (63) M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. III, (Delhi, 1975), p.6.
- (64) A.F.P. Harcourt, *The Himalayan District of Kooch, Lahoul & Spiti* (Delhi, 1972), p.127.
- (65) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.127.

- (66) T.S. Negi (ed.) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Lahul and Spiti* (Chandigarh, 1975), p.71.
- (67) *Gazetteer of the Kangra District*, Vol. II, *Kulu, Lahul and Spiti*, (Lahore, 1918), p.192.
- (68) Harcourt mentions three religions of Lahul as Buddhism, Hinduism and *Loong-pai-chos*. The last one literally means religion of the valley or indigenous religion. It comprises those religious practices which are not identifiable with either Hinduism or Buddhism. Some of these practices are of a native growth. A.F.P. Harcourt, *the Himalayan District of Kooloo, Lahoul and Spiti*, (Delhi, 1972), p.65.
- (69) Among the important monasteries are those of *Guru Ghantal, Kardang, Shashur* and *Tayal* in Lahul. The Gelong of the highest rank must visit Tashihampo or Thassa in order to obtain the degree. All the Lamas can read and write. M.A. Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, Vol. III, (Delhi, 1979), p.9.
- (70) For details about the ceremonies and rites connected with a girl who enters the order of nun see, A.F.P. Harcourt, *op.cit.*, pp. 66-67.
- (71) A.P.F. Harcourt, *op.cit.*, pp. 59,65.
- (72) The Pangi region touches the border of Jammu and Kashmir. This region is enclosed within the lofty ranges of the great Himalayas and the Pir Panjal.
- (73) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.121.
- (74) H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes*, vol. II, *op.cit.*, p.196. For further details about the Pangwal tribe see also Ami Chand Kamal, *Integration of Tribes in Himachal Pradesh: A Study of Pangwals*, H.P. University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1984 (unpublished), chapter III, pp. 84-105.
- (75) S.S. Shashi, *Himachal : Nature's Peaceful Paradise*, (Delhi, 1971), p.123.
- (76) S.S. Chib, *This Beautiful India, Himachal Pradesh*, (Delhi, 1977), p.105
- (77) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Chamba*, (Ambala, 1971), p.209.
- (78) *Ibid.*, pp. 209-10
- (79) S.S. Shashi, *op.cit.*, p.125.
- (80) *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteer, Chamba*, pp. 211-12; S.S. Shashi, *op.cit.*, p. 126.
- (81) H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes*, vol. II, (Delhi, 1917), p.198. For further details see Sanjog Bhushan, *Himachal Tribes : Their History and Socio-Religious Conditions*, H.P. University, M.Phil. Dissertation, 1984 (unpublished). See also S.S. Charak, *op.cit.*, vol. III, pp. 13-14; 33-39 and 24-32.

APPENDIX - I

TRANSLATION OF A TREATY CONCLUDED BY MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH OF LAHORE WITH RAJA SANSAR CHAND OF KANGRA DATED 5TH SAWAN, 1966 SAMVAT

(Seal of Ranjit Singh)

(Original Signature in Gurmukhi)

A treaty and solemn compact is hereby concluded with Raja Sansar Chand, who agrees to transfer the fort of Kangra and district of Sandhata to the government of Lahore, subject to the following conditions:

Accordingly, after being duly signed and sealed, this instrument is delivered to the Raja.

Clause I - By the favour of Guru Dialji, the whole of the Gurkhas shall be driven across the Sutlej and Yamuna.

Clause II - Whatever countries have been alienated from the Raja, since the arrival of the Gurkhas, shall be, as hereinafter set forth, restored to his possession, according to the best of my ability, viz., Bhorat, Nuhera (the Khalsaji will not retain these) Chauki, Kotwalbah, Siba, Chanaur, Ghoasan, Chutgarh and Talhat, Chadiar and Chando, Baira etc., in Mandi.

Clause III - The entire revenue of whatever countries were in the possession of the Raja previous to the Gurkha advent, shall be left to the free and exclusive use of the Raja, and, until before mentioned arrangements are effected for the Raja, Bhai Fateh Singh shall remain in the fort, but if one or two only of the beforementioned places shall not have been transferred, the garrison of the *Khalsa* shall nevertheless be introduced into the fort, and the remaining places shall subsequently be conquered.

Clause- IV Except Qila Kangra, with the *taluka* of Sandhata, the government of Lahore has no claim whatever on the Raja, whether for life, property, dignity, service or revenue, and in exchange for Sandhata some other places in the hills will be conferred on the Raja.

Clause V - The foregoing clauses in the treaty shall remain in full force, and not be disturbed by any of the descendants of the contracting parties.

I hereby swear by *Akalpurkhji*, *Sri Jwalamukhiji*, *Sri Baba Nanakji*, *Sri Guru Harji*, *Sri Amritsarji*, *Sri Guru Arjanji*, *Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji*, *Sri Baba Gurditaji*, *Sri Anandpurji*, that I will faithfully maintain the whole of the provisions of this treaty to the best of my ability.

This solemn compact is written that it may form an absolute and complete instrument.

Written at Sri *Jwalamukhiji* on Tuesday, the 5th *Sawan*, 1866
Samvat (corresponding to about 20th July, 1809 A.D.)

APPENDIX - II

**TREATY BETWEEN THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT
AND THE
STATE OF LAHORE
CONCLUDED AT LAHORE
ON MARCH 9, 1846**

Whereas the treaty of amity and concord, which was concluded between the British Government and the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Lahore, in 1809, was broked by the unprovoked aggression on the British provinces of the Sikh army, in December last.

And whereas on that occasion, by the proclamation dated 13th December, the territories then in the occupation of the Maharaja of Lahore, on the left or British bank of river Sutlej were confiscated and annexed to the British province and since that time, hostile operations have been prosecuted by the two governments, the one against the other, which has resulted in the occupation of Lahore by the British troops.

And whereas it has been determined that, upon certain conditions, peace shall be re-established between the two governments, the following treaty of peace between the honourable English East India Company and Maharaja Dalip Singh Bahadur and his children, heirs and successors has been concluded on the part of honourable company by Frederick Currie Esq. and Brevet. Major Henery Montgomery Lawrence, by virtue of full powers to that effect vested in them by the Right Honourable Sir Henery Harding G.C.S., one of her Britain Majesty's

most hon'ble Privy Council, Governor General, appointed by the Hon'ble Company to direct and control other affairs in the East Indies, and, on the part of His Highness the Maharaja Dalip Singh, by Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Chattar Singh, Attariwala, Sardar Major Singh Majithia, Diwan Dina Nath and Faqir Nuruddin, vested with full powers and authorities on the part of His Highness.

Article - 1 There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the British Government, on one part, and Maharaja Dalip Singh, his heirs and successors on the other.

Article - 2 That Maharaja of Lahore renounces for himself, his heirs and successors, all claim to, or connection with, the *territories lying to the south of the river Sutlej* and engages never to have any concern with these territories, or the inhabitants thereof.

Article - 3 The Maharaja cedes to the Hon'ble Company, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories and rights in the Doab or country, *hill and plain, situated between the rivers Beas and Sutlej*.

Article - 4 The British Government having demanded from the Lahore State, as indemnification for the expenses of the war, in addition to the cession of the territory described in article 3, payment of one and half crore of rupees, and the Lahore Government being unable to pay the whole of the sum of this time, or to give security satisfactory to the British Government for its eventual payment, the Maharaja cedes to the Hon'ble Company, in perpetual sovereignty as equivalent for one crore of rupees, *all his forts, territories, rights and interests, in the hill country, which are situated between the river Beas and Indus, including the province of Kashmir and Hazara*.

Note: the remaining 12 articles are not directly related to Himachal Pradesh.

This treaty, consisting of sixteen articles, has been this day settled by Frederick Currie Esq. and Brevet, Major Henery Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the direction of the Right Hon'ble Sir Henry Hardings G.C.S., Governor General, on the part of the British Government, and by Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Chattar Singh Attariwala, Sardar Ranjor Singh Majithia, Diwan Dina

Nath and Faqir Nuruddin on the part of Maharaja Dalip Singh, and the said treaty has been this day ratified by the seal of the Right Hon'ble Sir Henery Hardings, G.C.B., Governor General, and by that of His Highness Maharaja Dalip Singh.

Done at Lahore, this 9th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1846, corresponding with the 10th day of *Rabi-ul-Awal* 1262, *Hijri*, and ratified the same day.

1. The Raja shall pay annually, into the treasury of *Simla and Sabathu*, one lakh of Company's rupees as *nazrana* by two instalments - the first instalment on 1st June and the second on 1st November.
2. He shall not levy toll and taxes on goods imported and exported, but shall consider it incumbent on him to protect bankers and traders in his state.
3. He shall construct within his territory roads not less than 12 feet in width and keep them in good condition.
4. He shall put down and level the fort of Kamalgarh and Nentpur and never attempt to rebuild them.
5. On the breaking out of disturbance, he shall together with his troops and hill porters join the British army and be ready to execute whatever orders may be issued to him by the British authority and supply provisions according to his means.
6. He shall refer to the British courts any dispute which may arise between him and any other chief.
7. In regard to duties on the iron and salt mines etc., in the territory of Mandi, rules shall be laid after consultation with the Superintendent of the Hill States and these rules shall not be departed from.
8. The Raja shall not alienate any portion of the land of such territory without the knowledge and consent of the British Government nor transfer it by way of mortgage.

9. He shall so put an end to the practice of slave dealing, sati, female infanticide and burning and drowning of the lepers, which are opposed to the British laws, that no one in future shall venture to revive them.

It behoves the Raja not to encroach beyond the boundaries of his state or the territory of any other chief but to abide by the terms of this *sanad* and adopt such measures as may tend to the welfare of his people, the prosperity of his country and the improvement of the soil, and ensure the administration of even handed justice to the aggrieved, the restoration of the people of their just rights and the security of the roads, he shall not subject his people to extortion, but keep always contented. The subjects of the state of Mandi shall regard the Raja and his successors as above described to be the sole proprietor of that territory and never refuse to pay him the revenue due by them but remain obedient to him and act up to his just orders.

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INDEX

Names of Persons

- Abdul Aziz 99
 Abdul Aziz Khan Naqshbandi 113 (50)
 Abdul Hai Habibi 29 (17)
 Abdul Majid Khan 29 (18)
 Abdul Qadir Badauni 13, 82, 87(25)
 Abdul Rashid 77
 Abdullah 8, 30(26)
 Abdullah Khan Pathan 118
 Abdur Rahman 91
 Abdur Rahim 29(20)
 Abdus Samad Khan 133
 Abhaya Chand, Raja, 102
 Abhoj Dev 56
 Abu Talib Husaini 30(25)
 Abul Fazl 13, 30(27), 91, 96, 110(1), (2), (4), (9), 112(26), (27), (28)
 Abul Qasim 92
 Adina Beg 131
 Afif, Sharms Siraj 12, 78, 80, 82, 86(19), (28), 87(31-3), 88(40)
 Ahmad Shah Batalvi 15
 Ahmad Shah Durran 32(50), 135
 Ahmad Yadgar 13, 30(26)
 Ajai Chand 54
 Ajai Dev 56
 Ajbar Sen 53
 Ajit Singh (of Kulu) 167
 Ajit Singh, Prince 131
 Akbar, Emperor 13, 51-52, 68(83), 90-92, 94-96, 103, 108, 110(6), 111(7), 112 (29)
 Akshar Singh, Mian 24
 Al Utbi, Abu Nasir 29(16), 75, 85(4)
 Alam Chand 102, 114(61)
 Alak Singh 59
 Alif Khan 126
 Aliuddin, Mufti, 14, 32(44)
 Alexander 46, 88(37)
 Amar Singh 61, 35(88), 148(63)
 Amar Singh Thapa 56, 137, 154, 156-61, 175
 Amit Timur 13, 30(25), 83, 88(42), (43)
 Amoghabhuti 45
 Anand Chand, Raja 32, 83(95), 179(84)
 Anandpala 75
 Angad, Guru 141
 Anirudh Chand (of Kangra) 138, 140, 150(83), 167
 Apollodotus 18
 Archer, Major 20, 33
 Arjun Dev, Guru 13, 30(31), 120
 Asalat Khan 123
 Ashraf Ali, Mirza 29(20)
 Asightigin 89
 Asoka, Emperor 16-17, 20, 32(57)
 Ason, Genl. 186
 Audambaras 41, 42, 64(19)
 Aurangzeb, Emperor 13, 60-61, 101, 106, 108, 126, 130-31, 133, 136, 228(24)
 Aziz Khan, Naqshbandi 115
 Azizuddin, Faqir 140
 Azmatullah 131
 Babur, Emperor 83, 118
 Badauni, Abdul Qadir 30(28), 82, 86(15)
 Badr Chach 12, 29(18), 78, 86(15), (18)
 Bahadur Khan 123
 Bahadur Shah, emperor 154
 Bahadur Shah (of Nepal) 133, 154
 Bahlikas 47
 Bahu Sen 53

- Bakht Mal 14, 31(42), 91, 110(2)
 Bakht Parkash,Raja 125
 Bal Bhadra Thapa 181
 Balak Ram Sud 24
 Balbhadraraja 111(19)
 banabhatta 48, 66(53)
 Barani, (See Ziauddin Barani)
 Banda Singh Bahadur (Banda Bairagi) 14,
 133-34, 148(54)
 Barnes, G.C. 21, 25
 Basu, Raja 68(83), 95-96, 103, 111(19),
 112(32), 115(70)
 Bhaga,Wazir 179(73)
 Bhagat Chand (of Jubbal) 171
 Bhai Bala 31(32)
 Bhai Ram Singh 268
 Bhai Sukha Singh 13
 Bhairo 121
 Bhambu Rai 70(124)
 Bhandari (collection) 21
 Bhandari,Sujan Rai 31(40)
 Bhim Chand (Raja of Kahlur) 13-14, 101,
 122, 124, 17^r-27, 129-30, 133, 146(30)
 Bhim Pal 86(11)
 Bhim Singh 186
 Bhima Kali 224
 Bhidhi Chand, Raja 62, 92, 94, 96, 109,
 112(24)
 Bir Chand 53-54
 Bir Singh (Raja of Nurpur) 139, 141,151,
 166,178(67), 183, 187, 200(15)
 Birbal, Raja 92,94
 Bijay Singh (Raja of Mandi) 179(83)
 Bikramajit, Raja 98,104,113(48)
 Bishambhar 104
 Brahmagupta 65(29)
 Briggs, Capt.D. 87
 Buck, E.J. 25
 Budda (Gautam) 66(45)
 Budhi Parkash, Raja 108
 Bute Shah 15, 32(45)
- Chandan Singh, Raja 151
 Chander Bhan Chand 100-101, 113(52),
 114(55), (56)
 Chandragupta Maurya 44, 47, 66(48)
 Chandresvara, Sri. 47
 Charhat Singh, Raja 23,167, 151(88)
 Chatar Singh, Raja 23, 106, 108, 116(81)
 Chattar Singh Attariwala 268
 Chitravarma 53, 56
- Cooper, Lt. Col. 159
 Cunningham, Alexander 18, 21
 Currie, Frederick 267
- Dalel Singh, Raja 23, 55
 Dalhousie, Lord 178(68)
 Dalip Singh, Maharaja 24, 268
 Damangs 49
 Damodar Pandey 154
 Dandeki 65(29)
 Dangi, Wazir 160, 176(24), 176(28)
 Dara Shukoh 108
 Dasas 19
 Dasyus 40
 Datar Chand 52
 Daulat Khan 83
 Daya Ram, Prohit 124-25
 Dayal Chand, Raja 148
 Deep Chand,d Raja of Kahlur 69(94), 123
 Demetrius-I 42
 Deo Karan 71
 Desa Singh Majithia 138-39, 141-42,
 150(80), 167
 Dharaghosha 42
 Dharam Chand 30(24), 91-92, 112(29),
 129
 Dharam Chand (Raja of Hindur) 132
 Dharam Parkash, Raja 108
 Dhian Singh, Raja 52, 139, 150(84), 167
 Dhruvaswamini 47
 Dialji, Guru 266
 Dilawar Khan 130-31
 Dina Nath, Raja 32(53)
 Dip Chand,Raja 54,69, (94), 108, 147(48)
 Diwan Amar Nath 15
 Diwan Chand 146
 Diwan Dina Nath 268
 Diwan Mohkam Chand 137, 140
 Diwan Nand Chand 126
 Diwan Rai Bhagwant 32
 Diwan Sarb Dyal 25
 Dravya Shah 154
 Dums 49
 Durga Singh, Raja of Bhagat 60, 190
- Erskine 167-68, 199(3)
- Farrukh Siyar 155
 Fateh Chand 13,178(60)
 Fateh Shah (Raja of Garhwal) 14, 123-25,
 128

- Fateh Singh Ahluwalia 68,137
 Fateh Singh Kalianwala 137-38
 Fateh Singh (Raja of Sirmur) 57, 165-66
 Freishta, Muhammad Qasim 12, 29(16),
 85(4), 85(11), 86(16), 87(28), 88(40)
 Feroz Tughluq, Sultan 12, 30(22), 77, 79,
 81-83, 87(28), (29), 90
 Fraser, J.B. 35, 82, 160-61, 175(14),
 204(53)
 French, Joseph, Charles 33

 Ganesh Das Badehra 15-16, 32(45)
 Ganga Parshad, Munshi 15
 Garab Chand 58
 George Forster 20, 35(82)
 George Russell Clerk 166, 168, 178 (59)
 George Trebeck 20, 35(82)
 Gerard, A. 21
 Gerard, J.D. 21
 Gerard, Patrick 21
 Gharamand Chand, Raja 83, 102, 114(63),
 134, 136
 Gharnir Chand, Raja 102
 Ghazi Khan 83, 91
 Ghazi Khan, Sur 91
 Ghulam Husain 14, 31(39)
 Gillespie, Major Genl. Rollo 159-60
 Giri Sen 56
 Gopi Chand, Raja 94, 111(7)
 Gopal Chand, Raja of Guler 14,125
 Goverdhan Singh, Rana of Dhamni 57,
 201(15)
 Govind Chander, Chief of Datarpur 139
 Guru Gobind Singh 13, 18, 31(33), (37),
 101-102, 109, 122, 124, 126-28, 130-132,
 33, 135, 147(42)
 Gulab Singh, raja 169-70
 Gurditta, Bhai 150
 Guru Nanak 30(32), 32(50), 118-20
 Gyan Singh, Gyani, 31(36),145(16)

 Halis 49
 Hamir Chand 102
 Hamir Sen 53
 Handu 54
 Harding, Henry 268
 Hargobind, Guru 13, 120-22, 129, 145(10),
 145(14)
 Haji-ud-Dabir 87(25)
 Harcourt, A.F.P. 20, 35(82), 36(94)
 Hari Chand, Raja 14, 51, 83, 100, 101,
 114(57), 124-25
 Har Rai, Guru 13, 121
 Harshvardhana 44, 48-49
 Hayat Khan 125
 Hermen Goetz 23
 Hira Chand, Raja 179(83), 201(20)
 Hugel, B.C. 20, 35(82)
 Hiuen Tsang 19-20, 35(80), 49, 66(45)
 Humayun, Emperor 110(2)
 Hunas 48, 67(82)
 Husain Beg 111
 Hussain Ullah Khan 101
 Hussain Quli Khan 92-93, 111(14)

 Ibn Batuta 86(21)
 Ibrahim Lodi 83
 Ibrahim Hussain Mirza 93
 Isri Sen, Raja 141-42
 Itmad-ud-Daula 98
 Izzuddin Khalid Khani 82

 Jagat Chand, Raja 169, 178(60), 179(82)
 Jagat Singh, Raja 53, 95-6, 99, 104-106,
 108, 113(44), 115(72)(78)
 Jahandar Shah 133
 Jahangir,emperor 12, 13, 30(30), 51-52,
 68(83), 87(28), 95-97, 99-100, 104,
 112(32) (33)
 Jaichand 92,94
 Jaichand, Raja 60,92
 Jai Singh, Raja of Jaswan 70(124), 179(82)
 Jai Singh Kanhaiya 114(62), 134-35
 Jaita (Jit Mal) 124
 Jalaluddin Masud 86(14)
 Jalmani 65(29)
 Janaki 65(29)
 Janardan Varman, raja 113,120-21
 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia 133
 Jassa Singh Ramgarhia 133, 135, 136,
 148(61)
 Jaswant Singh, Raja of Nurpur 209
 Jaswant Rao Holkar 149(74)
 Jit Singh, Raja of Chamba 149(71), 174(6)
 Jograj, Thakur of Balslon 201(20)
 John Peel 184,199(8)
 Jora, Pt. 150(79)
 Jowaharji 124

 Kachhagupta 47,66(52)
 Kahan Chand 54
 Kahlu, Guijar 69(94)

- Kalhana 12,29(15),67(64),80,87(28)
 Kalidasa 11
 Kalyan Chand, Raja 113(52), 145(14)
 Kambojas 66(48)
 Kamdoporath 65(29)
 Kanhaiya Lal 15
 Kanhaiya Lal Butail 202(29)
 Kanshi Ram, Baba 202(29)
 Karam Chand, Raja 83
 Karam Parkash, Raja of Sirmur 59,108,142
 Karan Dev 112(21)
 Kauravas 43
 Kaushika 64(19)
 Kaushtaki 65(29)
 Kehri Singh, Raja 60
 Kennedy, C.P. 70(125)
 Kesri Chand 124,126
 Khafi Khan 14,31(38)
 Khwand Mir 12,29(16),86(11)
 Khan Bahadur 122
 Khan-i-Jahan 123-24
 Kharak Singh, Prince 140
 Khasas 66(48)
 Khurram, Prince 103,105
 Khushal Singh, Jamadar 141
 Kunindas 41,44
 Khushwaqt Rai 14,31(43)
 Khusrav Malik 79,87(26)
 Kinners (Kinnauris) 48, 65(35)
 Kiratas 66(48)
 Kirat Chand 60,70(124)
 Kirat Parkash 61
 Kirti Rana 161
 Kirpal Chand Katoch 14,124-27
 Kishan Singh, Raja 139
 Kishan Singh, rana of Bagha 1200(13)
 Kol 49
 Kolis 49
 Kulutas 41,44,53,68(88)
 Kuminda (Kulinda) 41, 44, 65(34), (38)
 Kushans 41, 44-47, 65(38), 66(41)
 Lakshman Sen, Raja 53
 Lakshaman Sen, Raja of Suket 192,202(35)
 Lalitaditya 11
 Lal Singh, Raja 168
 Lawrence, John 184,186
 Lawrence, Major Henry 267
 Lehna Singh Majithia 23,141,151
 Lyall J.B. 22
 Macleod, D. 159,184
 Madho Singh 103
 Mahadeva 42
 Mahatma Gandhi 190
 Mahipal, Raja 89
 Mahmud, Sultan 12, 51, 74-75, 76-77,86, (11), 90
 Mahan Chand, Raja 54, 142, 149(70)
 Major Singh Majithia 268
 Maldeo 177(57)
 Maluk Chand, raja 96
 Man Singh, Raja 53, 62, 106
 Manik Chand 30(24), 87(28), 92
 Mandhata Parkash 108, 116(82), (83)
 Martindell, Major Genl. 160-61
 Maudad 77
 Mawbey, Major 182
 Medini Parkash, Raja 14, 109,123,127-28, 145(19)
 Megh Chand, Raja 83
 Mian Ahmad Yar 15
 Mian Jai Singh (of Baghal) 201(15)
 Minto, Lord 150(75)
 Mir Khan 102,116(81)
 Mirza Obed Beg 108
 Mohinder Singh, Raja 56,158,168
 Mohinder Singh (Raja of Baghat) 164
 Mohri Chand 124
 Mohsin Fani 13,121,144(10)
 Moorcroft, W. 20, 26, 35(82), 36(93), 140, 150(77), 150(83), 151(94), 175(21)
 Mountbatten, Lord 172
 Muazzam, Prince 147(43)
 Mubarak Khan Gakhar 92
 Muhammad Baktiyar Khalji 53
 Muhammad bin Tughluq, Sultan 12, 77-79, 87(26), 90
 Muhammad Khan Turkoman 95
 Muhammad Sultan Bahadur 116(84)
 Muhammad Taqi 97
 Mukand Lal 192
 Mundas 49
 Murad Baksh 106,115(75)
 Murray, Capt. 168,178(59)
 Murtaza Khan (Ahaikh Farid) 96-97, 103-104, 112(25), 113(50)
 Nadir Shah 135
 Nagas 49
 Nanak Dev, Guru (see Guru Nanak)
 Narain Das 177(57)
 Narain Pal 178(67)
 Narain Singh, Raja of Kutlehr 169
 Narbhupal Shah 154
 Narayan Shah 176
 Nasiruddin Mahmud 86(14)
 Nathu, Wazir of Chamba 23, 138, 140,

- 151(87), 151(93), 156
 Nausheba 88(37)
 Nehru, Pt. Jawaharlal 172
 Niarnatullah 13
 Nirjabt Khan 116(82)
 Nishads 49
 Nizamuddin Ahnmd 12, 30(29), 85(11),
 91, 94, 110(4), (5), 111(8),(10), 111(15)
 Nizamulmulk Muhammad Junaidi 86(14)
 Nurjahan Begum 121
 Nuruddin Faqir 268
 Ochterlony, Major, David 158-59, 161,
 175(14), (15)
 Padam Chand 86(13)
 Padam Dev 190,192,202(33)
 Painda Khan 131
 Pandavas 64(13)
 Panini 42-43,46,66(50)
 Parasikas 66(48)
 Parasram, Raja 111(19)
 Parbhar Vardhan 48
 Prabodh Chand, raja 167,199(1)
 Parmar, Y.S. 179(85),190,202(37)
 Parmod Chand Katoch 78(48)
 Parry 119
 Partap Singh, Raja of Kulu 103,186-87
 Parvataka 66(48)
 Pardhyuman Shah 154
 Parsidh Pal, Raja 62
 Prem Narayan 115(78)
 Primoo 160
 Princep, T. 15
 Priti Singh 60
 Prithvi Chand, Raja 79, 106, 115(75), (78),
 126
 Prithviraj Chauhan 57
 Prithvi Singh, Raja 23,106,115(80),133
 Purab Chand 51,111(7)
 Puran Chand, Raja of Jubbal 59,168
 Qutlugh Khan 86(14)
 Qazi Amar Singh Thapa (see Amar Singh
 Thapa)
 Raghu Nath Sen 69(102)
 Raghu Nath Singh 31
 Raj Singh, raja of Chamba 23,33(64),133
 Raj Singh, raja of Kulu 128,148(63)
 Rajilabala 57
 Rajrup Singh 68(83),105,108
 Ram Chand, Raja of Guler 92,110(5),(7)
 Ram Parshad Bairagi 229(15)
 Ram Singh Pathania, Wazir 182, 184, 185,
 199(1), (8)
 Ram Singh, Raja of Jaswan 179(82),183
 Rama, Bhai 145(18)
 Rama Gupta 66(53)
 Rana Sanga 124
 Ranbir Chand Katoch 167
 Ranjit Singh, Maharaja 10, 151-116, 23,
 32(50), (53), 53-54, 62, 118, 135-43,
 150(84),
 151(93),156-57,167-68,169,175(9),184
 Ranjodh Singh 150(80)
 Ranjor Singh Thapa 157,160-61
 Ratan Chand, Raja 83,88(40),(43)
 Ratan Sen, Raja 13
 Ratan Singh Bhangu 16
 Razia Sultan 86(14)
 Rizaqullah Mushtaqi 13,30(26)
 Robert Peel 184
 Robert Brown 184
 Rudar Pal, Raja 73
 Rudra Varma 42
 Rup Chand, Raja 51,79,87(29),(33),88(35),99
 Rup Sen 63
 Rustam Khan 95
 Sabha Chand 56
 Sabir Chand 70(124)
 Sada Nand Chandel 192
 Sadiq Khan 121
 Sahib Chand 124-25
 Saif Ali Khan (Nawab) 102,114(62)
 Saina Pat 13,31(35),153
 Salim Shah Sur 110(30)
 Samudragupta 45,47
 Samudrasen, Raja (of Kulu) 16-
 17,32(57),49
 Sangho Shah 125,146(26)
 Sangram Pal, Raja 106,116(81)
 Sansar Chand, Raja 15, 26, 51-52, 54,
 69(99), 83, 134-40, 142, 150(83), 155-57,
 175(9), 199(1)
 Sansar Chand, Raja of Keonthal 201(20),
 129
 Sansar Sen 69(102)
 Santokh Singh 31(36)
 Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori 57, 77

- Shahjahan, Emperor 13, 23, 30(25), 51, 57, 61, 68(83), 77, 97-100, 105-106, 115(72) 116(82)
 Shah Shuja 151(90)
 Shahnawaz Khan 12, 29(20), 87(28), (32), 112(25), 115(73), (75)
 Shaikha 83
 Shaikh Farid 95-96, 112(25)
 Shaikh Ishaq 99
 Shaikh Faizullah 99, 113(50)
 Shambhara 40
 Shamas Siraj Afif (See Afif)
 Sham Singh, Raja of Chamba 179(83)
 Sham Singh Pathania 183-85
 Shamsher Singh (of Guler) 185
 Sharfuddin Yazdi 88(42)
 Sher Jang Chaudhary 217
 Sher Singh, Maharaja 53, 184
 Sher Shah Suri 91, 110(2)
 Shiva Nand Ramaul 190, 192
 Sidh Sen, Raja 128, 133
 Sikandar Lodi 83
 Sikandar Shah Sur 91
 Skandagupta 48, 67(61)
 Sri Singh, Raja 24, 35(86), 200(13), 170
 Subhag Parkash, Raja 100, 116(84)
 Sujan Rai Bhandari 14
 Sukh Dev Chand, Raja 124, 126
 Sultan Muhammad Barakzai 32(48)
 Sulaiman Shukoh 108
 Sumer Parkash 61
 Suraj Mal, Raja 96-99, 103-104, 112(32), 113(44)
 Syed Jafar 178(57)
- Tabatabai, Jalal 113(45), 113(47), (49)
 Tahmas Khan 14, 31(41)
 Tara Chand, Raja 14, 121
 Teg Bahadur, Guru 122, 129
 Tej Singh 268
 Thomas Thomson 35(82)
 Tiloc Chand (Raja of Kangra) 96, 112(29)
- Tikam Das 161
 Timur, Amir 13, 30(25), 83, 88(42), 88(43)
 Triloka, Bhai 145(18)
 Todar Mal, Raja 94, 103, 111(17)
 Tusam Bahadur 98
- Udaji 124
 Udal Ram, Raja 101, 114(60)
 Udit Parkash 61
 Ugar Chand 59, 70(124)
 Ugar Sen, Raja 168, 170
 Ugar Singh, Raja of Bushahr 158
 Umed Singh, Raja 23, 160
 Usha Devi 204(54)
 Utbi, Abu Naser 29(16), 75, 85(4)
- Vahlikas 66(48)
 Veer Chand, Raja 69(94)
 Ventura, Genl. 53
 Victoria, Queen 171
 Vigne, G.T. 20, 35, (82), 174(5), 204(53)
 Vijay Chand, Raja 101, 141(60), 203(47)
 vikramaditya 56
 virata 43
 Vir Sen 63
 Virayash 19
 Vishakhadatta 11, 44, 60(53)
 Vishvamitra 64(19)
 Vogel, J.Ph. 22, 24, 50
- Wade, Capt. 167
 Wazir Khan 147(48), 148(51)
 Wheeler, Brig. 210
 William Hay, Lord 186-87
- Yadvindra Singh 32(51)
 Yahiya Sirhindi 86(15), 87(28)
 Yaudheyas 41, 44-45
 Yavanas 66(48)
- Zain Khan Koka 94
 Zalim Sen, Raja of Mandi 141-42
 Ziauddin Barani 12, 29(17), 78, 86(17), (25)

Names of the Places

- Afghanistan 46
 Ahmadgarh 191
 Ajeergarh 69(104)
 Alampur 114(61)
 Alipur 66(54)
 Aliwal 68
 Allahabad 45
 Almora 179(82), 185, 199(6)
 Amarpur 134
 Ambala 45, 57, 83, 166, 168, 177(56),
 201(19)
 Amber 95
 Amritsar 14, 53, 120, 133, 141, 168
 Anandgarh 131
 Anandpur Sahib 31(33), (37), 122-23, 126,
 130-32, 145(15)
 Anga 66(46)
 Arabian Sea 48
 Arki 19,56,157,159
 Assam 72,123
 Attock 170(48)
 Avanti 66(46)
- Baghal 55, 162, 164, 175(14), 186, 187,
 200(13), 201(20)
 Baghdal 88
 Baghee Bahawalpur 29(13),164
 Baijnath 18,34(67),119
 Bajaur 84
 Bajaura 5
 Balson 29(10), 55, 59-61, 157, 162, 187
 Bhangal 55,68(82), 176(31), 201(20), 211,
 220
 Banganga (stream) 5,33(59),63(3)
 Bara Bhangal 6
 Basohli 35(87),132,137,140,149(63),156
 Batala 133
 Bayana 80
 Beas (river) 5-6, 33(59), 39, 44, 63(3),
 66(45), 134,179
 Beja 29(10),55,176(31)
 Benaras 101
 Bengal 53,80,113(44)
 Bhajji 29(10), 55-57, 70(112), 176(31),
 187, 200(15)
 Bhadarwah 151(88), 140, 170, 179(73)
 Bhalai 115(88),116(81)
 Bhagat 12, 29(10), 55-58, 69(104), 162,
 164, 167, 168, 170(31), 190, 203(44)
 Bhangani 18,122,146(30)
 Bharauli 55,60
 Bharari 58
 Bharmour 211, 228(24)
 Bharoli 58
 Bhooj 188
 Bihar 110(4),122
 Bilaspur 5,9,28(4),31(37), 38-39, 54, 57-
 60,64(13),69(94),74,119,157,161-164,
 176(31), 178(58),(69), 179(83), 185,
 200(13), (15), 201(20), (22), 202(38),
 203(47)
 Bundelkhand 54
 Bushahr (see also Rampur Bushahr)
 29(10), 55, 59-60, 119, 157,161-62, 164,
 175(14), 176(31), (37), 185, 187
 Bust 87,
- Chakkar 34(74)
 Chakki 5,110(3)
 Chamba 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 16-19, 22-24, 26,
 28(2), (4), 47, 50, 52, 61, 74, 97-98, 102-
 105, 107-108, 111(19), 114(62), 115(78),
 119, 127, 134, 136, 137-138, 140-41,
 143, 144(7), 148(58), (63), 151(87), 157,
 170, 172, 179(73) (82), 187-88, 200(13),
 201(22), 202(38), 208, 210-212, 220,
 222, 225-26
 Chamkaur 128, 148(51)
 Chander Bhan Ka Tila 100,114(54)
 Chandrabhaga (Chenab) 6,111(19)
 Chanshal (stream) 5
 Chari 35(86)
 Chauragarh 115(78)
 Chedi 66(46)
 Chitor 174(1)
 Chopal 160,176(27)
 Coolhanj 188
- Dagshai 3,186
 Dale Ka Dhar 184,199(8)
 Dalog 68
 Dalhousie 104,200(13)
 Darkoti 29(10), 55, 176(31)
 Datarpur 51-52,134-136, 139, 143, 169,
 179(82), 185, 199(1)
 Daulatabad 80

- Dehar 193
 Deccan 131, 133, 147(49)
 Delath 55, 60, 162
 Delhi 52, 56-57, 76-80, 83-84, 86(21),
 87(31), 90, 92, 96, 99, 100, 107, 110(2),
 172, 190
 Dhadhi 55, 160
 Dehra (Gopipur) 16, 38, 81
 Dehra Dun 116(86), 155, 159
 Delath 70
 Dhaliara 16, 39
 Dahliog 104
 Dhameri (see also Nurpur) 12, 74, 92, 103
 Dhami 12, 29(10), 55, 57, 162, 187,
 176(31), 189
 Dhaneti 55
 Dhauladhar 4, 6, 55, 100, 113(54), 208
 Dharamsala 7, 119, 202(35)
 Dinanagar 140-41
 Dipalpur 134
 Dodra 70(125)
 Dujana 29(13)
 Dulchi (pass) 119

 Faridkot 29(13)
 Fatehgarh 131
 Ferozshah 168

 Gaj (stream) 5
 Gambar (river) 181-82
 Ganga-Yamuna-Doab 40
 Gangetic(plains) 48
 Ganges 220
 Ganjari 166
 Garhwal (see also Kumaon-Garhwal) 3, 5,
 41, 56, 59-61, 108, 109, 116(82), 119,
 123, 124, 128, 155, 161
 Ghund 55, 56, 59-61, 162
 Giri (river) 5, 18, 55-56
 Gobindsagar Lake 5
 Gobindgarh 53, 141
 Gujarat 184
 Guler 14, 16, 38-39, 68(82), 92, 93, 95, 99,
 100, 106, 108, 130, 135, 136, 138, 143,
 157, 169, 184
 Gurdaspur 119
 Gwalior 96, 101

 Hamirpur 19, 28(4), 114(61)
 Hamtu (pass) 120
 Handur (see Nalagarh)

 Hansa (stream) 5
 Hansi 77
 Haridwar 58, 150(84), 220
 Haripur 14, 134, 143, 144(7), 178(67)
 Haryana 15
 Hat Koti 16-18, 59, 61, 64(13), 70(118)
 Hattu 164
 Hazara 169
 Herat 87
 Himachal (Himachal Pradesh) 2, 3, 7-11,
 13-19, 23-24, 27, 38-42, 44, 46-49, 61,
 67(62), 74, 77, 84, 95, 96, 119, 120, 123,
 127, 134, 135, 143, 159, 162, 163, 169,
 170, 173, 182, 183,
 185,
 187, 188, 190, 191, 193, 195, 197, 198,
 208, 209, 214, 215, 217, 220, 225, 226
 Himalayas 2, 28(1), 39, 46, 61, 119-20, 154,
 158, 159, 206
 Hindukush 40
 Hindur (Nalagarh) 14, 16, 54, 56, 74, 122,
 124, 129, 130, 157, 162, 164, 175(14)
 Hoshiarpur 42, 55, 83, 136, 137
 Hyderabad 173

 Indus (river) 2, 54

 Jagat Sukh 63
 Jaidevi 192, 193
 Jai Sukh 101
 Jajnagar 80, 87(31)
 Jalandhar (Khand) 2, 20, 28(2), 42-43, 46,
 49, 51, 53, 57, 119, 134, 136
 Jammu 47, 83, 94-95, 101, 106,
 108, 169, 170, 184
 Jasrota 95, 137, 140, 112(21),
 140(70)Jaswan 51, 68(79), 92, 107, 124,
 127, 131, 134, 135, 136, 137, 139, 141,
 143, 169, 174(82),
 185, 199(1), (6)
 Jaunsar 165, 166
 Jhelum 139
 Jidya 92
 Jiuni (stream) 5
 Joharsar 140
 Jubbal 5, 17, 29(10), 55, 59, 61, 64(13),
 69(100), 70(119), 157, 160-162, 166,
 168, 172, 187
 Jullundhur (see also Jalandhar khand)
 28(2), 199(4), 200(13)
 Juggatgarh 165

- Jutogh 186,200(12)
 Junagarh 196
 Junga 186
 Juzjan 89
 Jwala Mukhi 16, 19, 27, 81-83, 88(36),
 (40), 90, 119, 140, 156-57
 Jythak 157,160
- Kabul 52,105,151(90)
 Kahlur (see also Bilaspur) 12, 14, 16, 54,
 56, 58, 69(94), 74, 120-127, 129, 133,
 136, 142, 155
 Kailash Parbat 120
 Kaiankhar 116(86)
 Kalanaur 133
 Kalanga fort 159
 Kali 184
 Kalpa 47
 Kalsi 108,166
 Kalsia 35(13)
 Kanauj 48
 Kangla 4
 Kangra (see also Bhimnagar and Kot Kangra) 4, 9-10, 13, 16-18, 21, 26-27, 28(4),
 32(47), 33(64), 35(79), 36(94), 38, 39,
 42, 45, 47, 51-52, 54-55, 57-58, 74-81,
 83, 84, 90, 103, 105, 108, 119, 121, 126,
 130, 133, 135, 137-142, 155-157, 167,
 169, 171, 182-83, 185, 187, 208, 212,
 217, 225
 Karangala 55,60,70(124)
 Kapurthala 29(13)
 Karsog 191,193
 Kasauli 3, 164, 186, 200(12)
 Kashmir 2, 3, 11, 40, 41,47-48, 52, 80, 100,
 140, 169, 173
 Kathmandu 154
 Kayadra (Kairda) Dun 159
 Keonthal 12, 29(10), 53, 56-59, 69(100),
 162, 164, 165, 167, 187
 Khairpur 29(13)
 Khurasan 74,78
 Kinnaur 4-5, 7, 9, 18, 28(4), 40-41, 60-61,
 208, 209, 217, 225, 226
 Kiratpur 119-121, 129, 133
 Kirgram 119
 Kishtwar 57
 Koti 55-56,58,187
 Kotkhai-Kotgarh 55, 60-61, 70(124), 157,
 162
 Kotla 93,137,139
- Kufri 58
 Kulu 5,9,14,16-20, 28(4), 29(10), 36(94),
 47, 49, 51, 53, 60-62, 64(13), 74, 78, 79,
 119-20,
 128, 137, 141, 143, 160-61, 167, 169, 183,
 186, 220, 223
 Kumarsain 29(10),162
 Kumaon (see Garhwal, Kumaon) 3,41,45,
 49, 78,161
 Kusumpti 58,69(100)
 Kuthar 29(10),55,57, 176(31), 162
 Kutlehr 54, 57-8, 69(98), 135, 169
 Kyari 188
- Lachori 19
 Ladakh 48, 61, 64, 119-20
 Lahore 13, 15, 51-52, 62,83-84, 94, 97,
 105, 130, 131, 133,1 36, 138, 139, 141-
 42,156,169,182
 Lahul (See also Lahul Spiti) 4, 7, 9, 28(2),
 61-62, 70(130), 71(135), 74, 106, 119,
 169, 208, 210, 220, 223, 225
 Lakhanpur 111(19),95,170
 Larji 5
 Leh 151(94)
 Lingti 72
 Loharu 29(13)
 Lohgarh 131,133
 Ludhiana 151(90), 157,166-67, 188
 Luni 5
- Madian 55-56,60,162
 Magadh 66(46)
 Mahal Mori 137
 Mahal Sarai 101
 Maharashtra 55
 Mahasu 9,57,208,210
 Makarsa 69(99)
 Makhowal 122,129,187
 Malerkotla 29(13)
 Malla 66(46)
 Mandi 5-7, 9, 14, 16-17, 26, 28(4), 29(10),
 34(74), 36(94), 47, 54-55, 74, 106, 119
 20, 128, 129, 133, 136, 137, 139, 141-
 143, 167, 169, 172, 187, 188, 190-91,
 208, 210, 217, 220
 Mangal 29(10),55, 58, 162
 Mani Majara 67
 Mani Mahesh 119
 Manglor 17,53
 Mankot (Maukot) 91,96,98,105,106



- Marinda 150(79)
 Markanda 38-39
 Marwar 58
 Mashobra 58
 Mathura 43,101
 Matti Kot 199(8)
 Mayapuri 63
 Mahlog 29(10), 58,176(31)
 Mirpur 123
 Mormi 61,166,178(57)
 Moulmein 185
 Multan 101

 Naibha 29(13)
 Nadaun 81, 101, 119, 122, 125-128, 130, 138, 140, 149(73), 150(84), 187
 Nagar 44
 Nagarkot (see also Kangra) 12, 43, 75, 77, 79, 81-83, 86(11), 91-95, 111(15)
 Nagaland 41
 Nahar (see also Sirmur) 3, 4, 61, 108, 123, 128, 157, 159, 160, 166
 Naldehra 133
 Nalagarh (see also Hindur) 9, 38, 39, 54, 56, 57, 60, 74, 122, 129, 157-58, 170, 176(31), 186,187
 Nanded 133
 Naraingarh 61
 Narbada 55
 Nawar 70(125)
 Nepal 40,41, 154-156, 161, 174(3)
 Nirmand 16-17, 32(57), 64(13)
 Nimoh 131
 Nurpur (see also Dhameri) 12, 17, 36(94), 52, 68(83), 74, 91-92, 97-100, 103-104, 106-107, 110(3), 130,134,135,137,139-140, 141, 143, 149(70), 151(91), 167, 169, 178(67), 182-185, 187, 199(4), 200(12)

 Oudh 187

 Pabar (river) 5,55,160
 Palam 174(6)
 Palampur 101,141(54),149(71)
 Panchala 66(46)
 Pandoh 6
 Pangana 53, 124-125, 127-128, 193
 Pangi (valley) 106, 226, 231(72)
 Paonta Sahib 109, 122-124, 127-128,145(15),217

 Parbati 5
 Patiala 15-16, 29(13), 61, 167, 178(57), 203(44)
 Patan 154,211
 Pataudi 29(13)
 Pathankot 42, 52, 92, 98, 100, 110(3), 119, 133, 140
 Pathiyar 16-17, 23(61), 149(71), 174(6)
 Patliputra 56
 Patna 122
 Peshawar 115(78)
 Phernu 192
 Pilibhit 121,144(8)
 Pin Parbati 4
 Pir Panjal 4,6,231(72)
 Pinjor 61, 119, 166, 187
 Plassia 185
 Pundar 70(125), 157, 166, 177(57)
 Punjab 3-5, 6, 9-10, 13, 15, 24, 40-43, 45-47, 53, 74, 77, 83-84, 86(11), 91, 93, 95-96, 99, 103, 105, 108, 118-119, 129, 133, 135-37, 149(74), 168, 172, 175(14), 178(68), 183-84, 186-87, 189, 191, 195-96

 Raipur 57
 Rajgarh 69(104)
 Rajasthan 39,67(73)
 Rajgir 101
 Rajputana (see also Rajasthan) 36(94), 50
 Ramgarh 95, 159, 166
 Rampur Bushahr (see also Bushahr) 61, 157, 158, 179(82), 185-86, 188, 192, 200(12), 201(22), 202(38), 204(53)
 Ratesh 56,59,162
 Ravi 6, 28(4), 43, 51, 134-136, 169-70, 183-84, 221
 Rawalsar (lake) 119,220
 Rawingarh 55, 59, 160-61, 164, 176(28)
 Renuka 64(13)
 Rihlu (fort) 103, 151(88), 174(6)
 Rohru 5
 Rohtang (pass) 106,220
 Ropar 53, 121 ,129,186
 Ror 39, 63(7)

 Sabathu 3,58,119,167,186,201(19)
 Sabraon 168-69
 Sagauli 161,175(14)
 Saharanpur 45,159
 Salanu 16-17

- Salari 17,33(61),47
 Salegaon 164
 Sambha 111
 Sambhal 55,86(14)
 Sampal 174(6)
 Sandhol 5
 Sangri 29(10),55,60,176(31)
 Sanjauli 58
 Sansari (nala) 6
 Septa-Sindhu 40
 Santurgarh 86(14)
 Sarahan 60,158,197
 Sarai Lashkari Khan 194
 Saraswati 5,39-40
 Sarau-ka-Tibba 184
 Sari 65,69
 Sarol 19
 Shahpur 183
 Shimla (Simla), Shimla Hills 3,4,9,17-19,
 27,28(4),44,54-55,58-60,62,137,161-
 62,165,167-68,171-173,175(14),185-
 187,189-90,192,194,200(12)
 Shiwalik (hills) 3-4, 12-13, 18, 40,44-45,
 63(12), 83, 91, 95, 122,133
 Sialkot 84,141,187
 Siba 51-52,100,135-36,143,187
 Sind 80,87(31), 168
 Sirhind 80, 91, 132, 147(49), 148(51)
 Sirmur (see also Nahan) 3, 9, 14, 16, 28(4),
 29(10), 38, 44, 55-56 ,59, 61, 64(13), 83,
 86(14), 108-109, 116(82), 119, 121, 123,
 127-128, 151(96), 160-62, 164-66, 172,
 175(14), (22), 176(31), 188, 191,
 202(30), (38), 203(44), 208, 210, 217
 Sirsa 38-39,147(51)
 Siul (tributary) 6
 Siyah 58
 Siwan 139
 Solan 27,28(4),167
 Spiti (see also Lahul-Spiti) 3, 7, 18, 28(4),
 61-62, 119-20, 169, 208, 209, 220, 222-
 23, 225
 Suket 12, 14, 29(10), 36(94),- 69(102),
 106, 119, 136-137, 143, 144(7), 168-170,
 172, 176(37), 191-92, 201(22), 202(31),
 (35)
 Suketi 5, 38-39
 Surghna 20, 49, 66(45)
 Sutlej 4,6, 14, 38-39, 43, 45; .51, 54-55, 58,
 111(19), 120, 135-36, 156-158, 161, 163,
 167, 168, 169, 175(14), 187, 204(54)
 Taksal 69(104),121
 Taragarh 98,106-107,115(74),158-59
 Tarain 77
 Tatta Pani 192
 Taxila 46
 Tehri 145
 Thaneshwar (Thaneswar) 48,77
 Tharoch 29(10),55,60,162,176(31)
 Theog 56,60-61,69(100),157,162
 Tibet 3, 5, 10, 48, 61, 79, 119, 206, 220
 Tira-Sujanpur (Sujanpur) 114(61),
 (63),115(79), 185,199 (6)
 Tons (valley) 5,16,17
 Trigarta 28(2),66(50)
 Triloknath 256
 Udabhandpura 88
 Udaipur 60,225
 Uhal 5
 Ujjain 66
 Una 15,28(4)
 Upper-Bari-Doab 42
 Utraj 166
 Uttar Pradesh 2,63
 Vatsa 66(46)
 Vriji 66(46)
 Yamuna (Jamuna) 28(4), 40, 45, 50, 55,
 66(45), 127, 139, 155, 158, 175(11)
 Zaskar (range) 4,5,29(7)
 Zaskai (range) 4

